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Lundi 11 mai 2015

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel



Chair: Daiene Vernile
Clerk: William Short

Présidente : Daiene Vernile
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE ET DU HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Monday 11 May 2015

Lundi 11 mai 2015

The committee met at 1400 in committee room 1.

STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. I'd like to welcome our presenters this afternoon and any guests who are here with us today.

Let me share with you the mandate of this committee. We are here to listen to your experiences—survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts—on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You are going to inform us on how to shift the social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward and reporting abuses. However, I do want to stress that we do not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases; that is better left to the legal authorities.

We welcome you and thank you for adding your voice to this important issue.

ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES OF TORONTO

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): To our first presenter, with the Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto, I say welcome. You will now have 15 minutes to address our committee. That will be followed by questions from our committee. Please start by stating your name, and begin any time.

Ms. Christa Big Canoe: Certainly. Hi.

Remarks in Anishinaabemowin.

Hello. I'm Christa Big Canoe. I'm the legal advocacy director at Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto, whose Anishnawbe name is Gaa kina gwii waabamaa debwewin, which means "All those who seek the truth."

First of all, I would like to thank the committee for inviting me and allowing me the opportunity to make my presentation. The fact that there has been a select committee struck, and the work that you're working on, demonstrate a willingness to address these issues, really serious matters to the survivors of sexual violence, so thank you.

Of course, one of the things that Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto often does is to try to contextualize the

aboriginal perspective and the aboriginal lived experience. Aboriginal Legal Services is a legal clinic and also an aboriginal legal service that has both Canadian mechanisms of law that we represent on, as well as ADR or internal aboriginal-driven processes.

Our office does a large amount of work with victims, particularly with victims of sexual violence, through the IAP, the Independent Assessment Process—those are Indian residential school survivors. We've assisted with CEP, the Common Experience Payment, again for residential school survivors. We also do work in victim advocacy areas, including and not limited to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

I would love to sit here today and say that a lot of our work is varied and diverse, but the unfortunate reality is that a lot of the work that we do for victims through the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board is mainly for survivors of sexual violence and abuse, particularly historical ones and ones who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

It goes without saying that Aboriginal Legal Services, pretty much on a regular basis, always tries to draw that context back to the historical harms of indigenous survivorship. So it goes without saying that in Canadian society, indigenous people—and I'm going to use the words "indigenous," "First Nations" and "aboriginal" somewhat intermittently, because I am also familiar with how the select committee, in preparing for today, in other locations has also heard those terms used interchangeably. With "indigenous" and "aboriginal," in both contexts, I'm using the language of the reports or the acts I'm referring to, but for all intents and purposes they mean the same thing.

I'd be remiss if I didn't touch quickly on the impact of the colonial legacy: things like the Indian residential schools or the Sixties Scoop, which have had a huge impact on the way that aboriginal people experience life in general, success and opportunity, as well as what barriers it throws up for them to access opportunities to escape things like sexual violence.

The historical context of this violence, in particular the legacies of colonialism, and discriminatory laws such as the Indian Act continue to adversely impact the well-being of indigenous women and girls specifically, yet police and health care professionals fail to adequately prioritize the health and safety of indigenous women. A

lack of culturally sensitive programs prevents the services that already exist from addressing the challenges specific to indigenous women's experiences.

In preparing for today, I did look at a number of the transcripts. Particularly, I looked at the full transcripts from the Sioux Lookout sitting, because it actually aligns most deeply with a lot of the same concerns that Aboriginal Legal Services start with. So rather than rehashing and going over some of the things this committee has already heard, I'm really going to focus the limited time I have on three areas. The three areas include missing and murdered indigenous women, poverty reduction as a larger strategy and criminal injuries compensation and mechanisms.

But I would also like to start with just laying out a couple of things we agree about. You folks have heard from a number of shelter services and crisis centres, particularly rape crisis centres, and the things Aboriginal Legal Services absolutely supports and agrees with from those groups is that there is an acute need for better and enough shelter supports and crisis programs. Many who have been here have echoed this need to meet capacity and that often these are above capacity and overflowing. We experience this daily when we're assisting a victim of crime. They don't have anywhere to go. We're only echoing that, rather than getting really deep into it. Specifically, wait-lists do not help in crisis circumstances. It's that simple. When there's nowhere for people to escape or go to, they're not of assistance.

Aboriginal Legal Services also agrees with the Pace submissions on April 10 in Sioux Lookout, in relation to sections 4, 10, and 16(h) of the Ontario Limitations Act. Again, without getting into details, we simply parrot the submissions they gave and support their submissions in relation to those. Simply said, we believe that continued commitment to the legislative change is important.

I'll start with missing and murdered indigenous women. I know this committee is also familiar with some of the statistics, and I'm not going to spend my limited time painting the really horrific picture that exists in Canada and in Ontario, which is the 1,200 missing and murdered indigenous women. While indigenous women and girls account for 10% of all female homicides in Canada, they make up just 3% of our female population. Those two high-level statistics are what I'm going to rely on because I know that you have a familiarity based on other submissions.

What I do want to talk about and point attention to is, recently there's a national coalition that is called the Legal Strategy Coalition, which has looked at and reviewed 58 studies that have been done. I'm talking federal level, but there's a role for provincial, so please bear with me.

On a federal level, there has been a long-standing call for a national inquiry. The current Premier, Premier Wynne, has also echoed that call, and this province has taken the position that there does need to be a national inquiry. We would obviously encourage you to continue that advocacy and that call. But what I really want the

committee to understand is that in looking at those 58 studies—and the reason the federal government is currently not calling a national inquiry is because they're relying on the information from these studies.

The Legal Strategy Coalition released a report on February 13, 2005, and they looked at these reports, reviews and inquiries that examined the causes of violence and made hundreds of recommendations. In fact, there were over 700 recommendations within these 58 reports. What this particular analysis, or study, did was look at what's being implemented and how. There were placeholders and spots that didn't speak just to federal but also to provincial. So I'd encourage this committee to make sure that they look to the Legal Strategy Coalition's report. They have this handy little spreadsheet that talks about whose jurisdiction it's under and how it has been implemented. Suffice it to say, there are some components where Ontario hasn't implemented recommendations that it clearly demonstrates would assist in decreasing violence.

The reports have been prepared by diverse sets of authors, mostly national or jurisdictional—being province by province or territory—as well as by aboriginal organizations and international organizations. There is considerable agreement between all the reports about the root causes of violence against indigenous women. This is significant: We're talking about 58 reports and over 700 recommendations, and the majority of them all agree that the same root causes exist.

Many reports stress that the economic and social marginalization of indigenous women makes them more susceptible to violence and less able to escape violent circumstances. In particular, a lack of access to education and employment opportunities results in high levels of poverty amongst indigenous women. In addition, according to some reports, indigenous women experience disproportionately high rates of food insecurity, overcrowded housing and homelessness.

High instances of family breakdown and the intervention of child welfare systems further contribute to the vulnerability of indigenous women and girls. In fact, as it relates to child apprehension, we are now apprehending children at a faster rate from First Nation women than we have at the height of residential schools. So when we're talking about basic things like food security and the fear of having your children apprehended, you can see how it's difficult when those basic needs aren't being met, how much more difficult it is to get the resources and access the resources when you're talking about remote communities or disenfranchised, marginalized urban aboriginal people.

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Finally, the reports all recognize that with the underlying root causes, there's a chronic underfunding of services to help indigenous women cope with these circumstances. That contributes to their susceptibility to violence and limited ability to leave violent situations.

According to many of the reports reviewed—this is really the important part and segue into my next

section—the poverty and discrimination experienced by indigenous women is a product of continuing racism and sexism in Canada that excludes and devalues indigenous women.

This points to my second issue, which is a poverty reduction strategy. I know this is a select committee on sexual violence, and there is no magic wand that's going to make it able to correct every situation, but there is definitely a need for the committee to also recognize those existing root causes as they apply to indigenous communities, women and families. I know you also spoke with male survivors of childhood sexual assault, particularly a number of them who are aboriginal. So there is a need to push and encourage larger poverty reduction because although it's great to ensure that we have capacity in shelters in crisis, if we're not actually resolving the larger housing, water and education issues, we'll continue to have the same conversations, particularly as they relate to the indigenous community.

With my last five minutes, I'd like to turn to my third issue, which is generally a conversation of criminal injuries compensation. Aboriginal Legal Services, as I had indicated earlier, does a number of victim advocacy representations, and we assist a number of individuals. In fact, the amount that we're assisting is only increasing every year. Unfortunately, a large number of those are sex assaults and childhood sexual abuse. We have actually had success in being able to utilize the legislation and the board's policies to get extensions. Normally, you have to apply within a two-year period, but we've been fortunate enough to find those exceptions that let an individual apply after the two years, and we've done that advocacy work. But quite frankly, it takes a lawyer or a legal service to do that. It is not user-friendly once you get past the basic application. That's my first point, making sure—because there's a large number of self-represented litigants, for lack of a better word, before boards and tribunals.

This is one of the better boards for a self-represented individual to be before, because the board demonstrates a level of compassion and patience with those who are before them. However, there are a number of nuances and small things that, without legal representation, make it difficult for victims or survivors of harm to make presentations to the board and to access, to the fullest ability of their rights and within legislation, the compensation they should be entitled to.

I'm just going to give you a quick example of this. There's the Victim Quick Response Program. It provides immediate assistance to victims of violent crime. Essentially, what happens is that if you go and make a report to the police and charges are laid, or even if they're not laid, there's a referral made to this program. However, one of the eligibility criteria is that you have to make the report to the police and that it's the police referring. So what happens when people are not making their reports? This is one of the actual mandates of this committee: encouraging individuals to make these reports or to speak out on these issues. But when you're talking about aboriginal

communities that are clearly estranged from the criminal justice system, that have historically been over-policed and not had a benefit in identifying as aboriginal or necessarily feel that they've been treated fairly within the system, there's already a resistance to reporting. So if there's a program that fast-tracks assistance to families, that's amazing, but what about those families that aren't reporting? If the mechanism is only going through police referrals or VWPW through criminal crowns' offices, then we're missing a whole host of individuals who could also be using those to assist them.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Big Canoe, you have one minute left, unless you wish to continue for your full 20 minutes, and then that will not leave questions from our committee. It's up to you.

Ms. Christa Big Canoe: I think, in all honesty, I probably have five minutes more of submissions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. There won't be any questions from the committee, then.

Ms. Christa Big Canoe: Is that okay?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes.

Ms. Christa Big Canoe: Okay. I'll leave it to you because you are the committee, after all.

The program is available to over 50 communities across the province. You can find out right online if you're eligible for this program or not and how to apply for support. Interestingly, though, just to do a sample to see how easy it would be in preparation for this, I clicked on. First, you're in the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and it sends you over to the ministry of victims and vulnerable persons. Then you get to put in the information and it asks what type of services. I just put in "sexual assault, child victim," which was one of the options. Then I started dropping in geographical locations also to get an idea.

In the example of the greater Toronto area, there are 112 matches for referrals to these types of programs that you or anyone can get online, which is helpful. But, for example, when I pick northern First Nations, such as Poplar Hill, three come up. The three that come up are Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service, child apprehension services, and the band office, which currently doesn't have a position in that role. So they get three options and none of them are going to actually put them on a referral track to the type of assistance they need.

Sometimes it comes up with zero results, so then you have to try another community close. For Manitoulin Island, for example, which hosts four First Nations communities, there were zero results, but the minute I put in Manitoulin district, there became nine.

Part of this is the concept that when we're talking about criminal compensation, it has to be accessible to the people who need it most. If it took me 25 minutes to get that answer, and I'm a lawyer who is familiar with those websites, how long is it going to take an individual who doesn't want to report it to the police to find out how they can stream through to access services?

One of the things that I think would be important would be to help indigenous communities have the op-

portunity to have outreach done prior so they understand how to access criminal compensation and what they're eligible for.

One of the other individuals who presented to this group was Brenda Dovick. She talked about the reluctance to report, especially evidenced by First Nation women who experience the lack of confidence they hold in the system. This is a truth that our clients face, too. They really do lack the confidence and often their experience—for instance, if they have a background of criminalization or if they have a background of sex work, when they contact police services they're often treated differently and we often hear stories of racism. So there's a reluctance to reach out, to pick up the phone to say, "Hey, look, I've been assaulted." That's more normal than I'd like it to be.

Again, this is what Ms. Dovick had presented to you. When you get a smaller community, if they disclose to police services like the NAPS detachment, where there are only two police officers—they're often related to people. Although they may be professional, word gets out pretty quick when in you're in a place of 100 people when you show up at the NAPS office. So there are all of these barriers that occur because of the distrust and geographical barriers.

There are two final things and then I'm just going to give you a short list of recommendations.

In our experience, when we go to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, due to current case law, the board is allowed to ask for a criminal record and to consider a criminal record as part of subsection 17(1) of the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act. They can then determine whether or not a person can be compensated. We don't necessarily challenge the board's discretion to look at that, but from an aboriginal perspective, failure to look at that at the same time as looking at the aboriginal circumstances, similar to the Gladue factors or what puts aboriginal people before criminal justice such as over-policing and over-charging, means that more often aboriginal people are going to get less compensation or no compensation—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Big Canoe, you have one minute left.

Ms. Christa Big Canoe: Yes—compared to their counterparts. So we have to think about criminal record versus criminal behaviour and keep a mind to balancing the harm of the offences, taking into consideration the reality of aboriginal people.

On that basis, I do have four recommendations, if I might.

Like Pace's submissions, Aboriginal Legal urges the committee to follow through on Kathleen Wynne's commitment to eliminate the remaining limitation periods for civil sexual assault, so that it's clear, understandable and fair to all victims.

As it relates to murdered and missing indigenous women, ALST asks that you continue to support and vocally advocate for a national inquiry and look at Ontario's solutions or what recommendations you could

be putting into place. Poverty reduction must stay on the radar; you cannot disassociate sexual violence from the experiences of poverty or the inability to thrive in society because of poverty.

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The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Big Canoe, you're out of time, so could you please wrap up very quickly? We have quite a few more presenters to listen to today.

Ms. Christa Big Canoe: I'm on my very last point.

My very last point is on communications and relationship with aboriginal agencies, communities and survivor groups; more information about the criminal injuries compensation and eligibility resources and mechanisms to assist those who do not report but need assistance are very important; and that there must be a recognition that all victims of sexual violence are worthy victims, regardless of the possibility of criminality or trajectory of crime. Therefore, it's important that we acknowledge that all survivors of sexual violence are worthy by treating them equally under the law and within the policy's framework. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Big Canoe, thank you very much for coming and informing our committee. If you would like to hand in your notes, we'd appreciate it, or if you want to email them to us—your recommendations—that would be very helpful. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

DISABLED WOMEN'S NETWORK ONTARIO

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our next presenter, Marianne Park, with DisAbleD Women's Network Ontario. Please come forward and make yourself comfortable.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Chair, a point of order: The last presenter referenced a legal strategies report. I'm wondering if we could ask research to gather that information for us and present it to the committee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll certainly do that.

So you will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions from our committee. Please start by stating your name, and begin anytime.

Ms. Marianne Park: My name is Marianne Park. I live in Woodstock, Ontario. I represent DAWN Ontario, DisAbleD Women's Network Ontario, and also represent an ad hoc coalition of survivors, researchers and experts in the field of workplace harassment and sexual harassment.

Just to give you a bit of a background, I bring a distinction to my submission. The distinction is that I am a woman with a disability: I am legally blind. I also have albinism—that's what gave me the unique hair colour, the platinum blond. I will let you know—and I was born this way—I am also a survivor of sexual harassment.

As we've heard the various pieces of sexual abuse and sexual violence, one component of that is sexual harass-

ment: sexual harassment in the workplace, but also street harassment, and in our faith communities harassment can take place. It also can take place in our work lives. Now, from the vantage point of those of us with disabilities, you folks, being learned, probably know that we indeed have a much higher rate of being abused because of our actual and perceived vulnerabilities. We also experience high unemployment. So if we are experiencing workplace harassment, there's a good chance that we will not report it, and if we do, that elusive dream of full-time employment will go up in smoke, and we will be left on a woefully inadequate system known as ODSP, Ontario Disability Support Program.

But the devastating effects and impact of workplace harassment stress all socio-economic and cultural boundaries. One of those big impacts is isolation. Before you are harassed at work, you feel isolated; that's probably why the perpetrator chose you. Then, after you're harassed, you feel you can't tell anyone, or if you do tell anyone, no one will believe you, because—you've heard it so often—it's your word against theirs. That isolation—your co-workers are afraid to speak with you because they know what's going on. They just don't want to acknowledge it because, if they acknowledge it, then something may have to be done. The other thing, too, is that they're afraid it's going to happen to them. So you're on this island, alone.

The isolation that takes place—because you're constantly having this chat within your own head: "Why is this happening to me? What did I do? How could I have avoided it?" The reality is—because it's the choice of the perpetrator to act that way—there's no possible way you can avoid it. It's constantly with you. Even when you're not at work, you're thinking about it. Now they may harass you at home, they may phone you, send you text messages, but it's always with you.

Something out of that isolation that starts to happen: Your family and friends see that you're different, you're more reticent, you don't want to engage in talking to them about what's going on in your life, and you become withdrawn. I've even heard victims who will say, "I don't even want to go to the mall because I might see that harasser. I might see somebody who knows what's going on." So there's that fear and you become more and more withdrawn.

One thing that we know through research—and later on you'll hear from Dr. Sandy Welsh from the University of Toronto. She's one of our collaborators, shall I say, with our little ad hoc coalition—a very scholarly pursuit that she does. We at DAWN Ontario wholeheartedly support her research and the recommendations she'll be coming up with. But as I say, we know that through that isolation, victims break off relationships with family and friends because you just don't want to tell what's going on.

Or the other extreme: You're talking about it all the time. And although the most sympathetic and empathetic friends and family feel you should draw a line under it and just get over it, that's not how it works. Workplace

harassment, sexual harassment, has cast a long shadow over your life.

So you've disclosed; now where do you go? The system's not self-navigating, that's for certain. Legal representation is hard to find and it's expensive. Counseling—does somebody know that a lot of victims don't want to go to a sexual assault centre because they'll say, "Well, that's for when it's really serious." The reality is, they belong there as well, but many sexual assault centres—one, they're not funded to look at the issue of workplace sexual harassment, and the other thing is that they're overwhelmed and underfunded as it is. So where do you go? It's a long process.

One of our survivors that's in this little ad hoc group, Sharon Scrimshaw, talked about her abuse going on for close to 20 years. She was employed by 3M, and the web of trying to get out of that and trying to get it addressed was arduous, to say the least. She admits, as other survivors admit, that eventually you become agoraphobic; you're frightened to go out because you're going to maybe see the person who harassed you, or you will be shunned by workers. She talks about people who she had known for 20 years and they would not speak with her or they would cross the street because they didn't want to be involved, because they were frightened of what would happen to them.

A lot of victims, after they've been harassed at work, if they didn't have a disability beforehand, they will become disabled because of the stress and the long-standing problems that you are facing. We know that it becomes like a snowball rolling down a hill. It becomes even more and more pronounced in your life, because you lose your job, or you can't go back because you're on sick leave. So your economic status is impacted. Maybe your kids were in organized sports but now you can't afford that because you're not bringing in any money. And then it comes out that sometimes you'll lose your job because you're not fit to go back to work or you end up on disability. And if it's in a community and everybody knows that you brought some type of action against an employer, who's going to hire you then? And everyone—I can tell you this, because I'm from small-town Ontario—everybody on the street is going to go, "Oh, there's that woman there. Do you know what she said Joe Blow did?" And so your chances of employability can be slim to none.

And then your self-esteem: Even if you had okay self-esteem, after enduring this harassment your self-esteem goes steadily downhill, and trying to convey that to somebody is very problematic. There are very few resources available to you. As I said, many victims will not go to a sexual assault centre or are hesitant because they think they're taking up resources of someplace else.

That, actually, is one of our major recommendations: There needs to be some centralized yet outreacheable—I don't even know if that's a word, but I'll say it is—location where victims of workplace harassment can turn to so that they would have advocates that understand—guides through the system, if you will—and those folks

would assist them in the legal, the social, the psychological aspect of workplace harassment.

1430

A 1-800 number is a good thing; there's no doubt about that. But I'm going to tell you right from the—I'm wearing my "person with a disability" hat here. A 1-800 number is good, but it has to be completely accessible. There has to be a TTY line. There has to be a mindset that we are going to be as inclusive as possible. Also, that mindset needs to be in any type of organization which is set up that will be specifically trained around workplace harassment: how to respond, how to support victims, how they can navigate the system. The recommendation we would be making is that that type of support would be put into already existing organizations. So it would lend a sustainability—and it has to be sustainable, not something that stands and then two years later it's gone.

There is so much work that has been done around the issue of workplace harassment. I believe you all have a copy of a 2004 report which I had the privilege of being involved with. That was from the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children. That's out of Western University. Interestingly enough, the same recommendations that we were making there in 2004 are basically the same recommendations we're making again: that there be some centralized location, some centralized service, if you will, that is throughout the province, though, perhaps operating through sexual assault centres or some other mechanism; where there is a body of knowledge where groups can be organized and information can be handed out, and navigators of the system will be there.

One thing people will tell you is that oftentimes some of the problems are that they may be negotiating two systems at the same time, such as if there was a complaint against—right now, we have a task force on the sexual abuse of patients that is going on. Many patients will say about that issue of, "I'm going through a regulatory process, but then I have to go through a legal process through the criminal courts," that many times there are time restrictions—so how you can get in on those processes. So that has to be looked at.

Any type of legislative changes around the issue of workplace harassment—I know we have Bill 168—has to take into account all employers, even non-profits. Our province still operates sheltered—it's not the province that operates them but transfer payment agencies—workshops for those of us with disabilities. Harassment needs to be covered in that area, yet it is not, and is not, really, in the disability community fully understood—fully understood. "Understood"? I'm creating my own language here.

The other piece, too, is that we have to see that harassment is looked at in all areas—in the faith community. A person could be sexually harassed in their faith community. They could be as they're doing volunteer work. They could be as they're doing recreational activities. All aspects of that have to come into play, and I cannot overemphasize the devastating impact it has on people's

lives—a long-standing impact, both physically and mentally. One of the things that will traumatize people once again is to relive it. So you have to keep retelling your story. You have to keep reliving it.

Then sometimes, in some mediated settlements, there's a gag order: You can't talk about your experience. For some people, that talking is the true healing. That's how you can heal, by talking, and by pulling all the threads of your life of how this came about into a fabric that will assist in your healing. In some mediated settlements that still is the case, that they cannot access psychological services to talk about their trauma, and that should be made illegal.

With that, I will conclude my discussion. You have a copy of my presentation. You also have a copy of the report from 2004. I will entertain any types of questions, if you have.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Ms. Park, our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Randy Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much, Marianne, for being here. I'd like you to just clarify a couple of things on two of the recommendations that you had included in your report, just for a better understanding. The first one is the last comment you made about the mediated settlements, with some of them having gag orders on speaking with health care professionals. I had not heard of that sort of gag order ever previously, so I was just wondering where we might have seen that or how prevalent it is.

The other point is: In your recommendations, you mention that there are different avenues and vehicles for a complaint approach, but that they cannot be done concurrently. So if you can just give us some clarification on what some of those complaint vehicles are so that we can have a better understanding.

Ms. Marianne Park: Certainly. I'll do the last one first. For example, if someone had lodged a complaint with one of the regulated health colleges, say the College of Physicians and Surgeons, but there was also a criminal complaint or a human rights complaint, a lot of times the criminal complaint will not be looked at until the college has made a decision on that, so that can tie your hands—or if you want to do a civil litigation, so you want to sue, that will tie your hands. Sometimes there are time restrictions on that, so you have to decide what avenue you are going to take for that one.

For the first piece, research found that a number of—particularly through places where it's unionized, where there have been negotiated, mediated settlements, that gag order has been placed on both perpetrator and victim not to ever say anything about that at all, and that includes to a health care professional. Now, where that becomes very problematic—obviously, you want to talk to heal. The other thing, too, is that where it will off time happen is where a person is not represented by legal counsel. They've negotiated themselves, thinking they're doing the best they can. Particularly if the perpetrator is represented by legal counsel, it will be, "Well, this is the best you're going to get. You need to do this now."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Committee members, I just want to stress that we do have a really full afternoon, so I encourage you to be very concise with your questions.

Our next questions now are from our NDP caucus.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you, Marianne, for your comprehensive and articulate presentation. I make up my own vernacularisms all the time, so don't worry. It was really comprehensive, really great.

Ms. Marianne Park: I'm in good company, then.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Just on the two recommendations that you pointed us to, have you seen any other jurisdictions which have implemented similar mechanisms, what have the outcomes been and have they been studied? Can you point us in the direction of what your recommendations are in practice?

Ms. Marianne Park: Where you can see them in practice—Ontario, of course, has been groundbreaking with Bill 168, with workplace harassment to be included in health safety. There are no other jurisdictions that have that comprehensive of coverage. But there are still gaping holes in it, unfortunately. That's what my main focus is.

Certainly, Dr. Welsh, this afternoon, will talk about health and safety. She would be much better suited, probably, to answer that completely than myself.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from our Liberal caucus: MPP—oh, you've got the wrong name in front of you—MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: In front?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: On this side, it's "Lalonde."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have a different name on this side.

Ms. Marianne Park: I could be facetious and say it looks good to me, but I will not.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you, Ms. Park. As you know, we've heard from many aspects that there is that risk factor. But I want to be a little bit more particular in terms of the demographics among disabled women. Based on your perspective, is there a higher risk in certain demographics of women with disabilities? And why is that?

Ms. Marianne Park: We do have a much higher risk of any type of violence at all because, historically, we have been deemed poor witnesses, not reliable, craving attention, many things like that. For women who cannot verbalize, it's a much higher rate of sexual abuse. Although, even for someone such as myself, as a woman with a disability, I am 150 times more likely to be abused than if I did not have the disability.

I'll just give you very, very quickly an anecdote: If I'm on a subway or a streetcar or a bus, if I have my white cane out, most times I'll get groped by someone. If I do not have the white cane out, it won't happen. Now, I do have the ability to cuss like a sailor, and so I will cuss them out like the rapper DMX. I have no problem doing that—a mouth like an absolute sewer.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And on that note, I will say thank you very much for coming and informing our committee today, Ms. Park.

Ms. Marianne Park: Thank you so much for your kind attention. Best of luck.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): To all of our guests now who are in the committee room, I would kindly ask that you vacate as we are about to do an in camera session. We're going to be speaking to our next witness in private. I invite you back for 3 p.m. You can go and come back. Thank you.

The committee continued in closed session from 1442 to 1500.

RISING ANGELS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We resume our public hearings now with our committee. I'd like to welcome our next guest: Rising Angels. Please start by stating your name. You will have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you.

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: My name is Katarina MacLeod. Do I just start?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin.

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: First of all, thank you for allowing me to discuss this very crucial and time-sensitive topic on how we, as a province, can give support to someone who has suffered sexual violence and exploitation, and how we can reduce this from maybe even happening in the first place. As someone who was sexually and physically abused as well as sexually exploited for almost 30 years, I believe that if there were more resources or support out there, I could have avoided some of these traumas.

My name is Katarina MacLeod, and I am the founder of Rising Angels. Rising Angels is an organization that helps women leave the sex trade. We offer mentoring to these women so that we can help them to get their lives back, as well as educate and advocate on the truths of exploitation.

For me, it all began at the tender age of five, when I was raped over a three-year period by a friend of the family. I didn't tell anyone for a few reasons, one being the threats and the fear, but also, this man convinced me that this was what girls did and this was what men wanted. Never mind the fact that no one noticed the signs or the trauma that I was going through—bedwetting, nightmares, defiant behaviour. In my mind, if no one noticed, it was no big deal. I was raped again at the age of nine, and this time I did tell, but it fell on deaf ears.

When my parents divorced and I lost my daddy, I went on a mission to fill this daddy-hole in my heart by using the things I had been taught by my rapists to get the attention I longed for from men. I became sexually active at 12 and addicted to drugs and alcohol. All of the men I was involved with—and yes, I say "men" because they were twice my age—were physically and sexually abusive, something that had become my normal. I ended

up getting married at 17 to an abusive man who was in and out of jail. Then I was held captive for three years by a man who murdered my husband. I have been whipped, kicked, punched, burned with cigarettes, and the list goes on.

I ended up attending a support group for abused women, where I was recruited into prostitution. I will say that in my desperation, I thought that if I could make some fast cash, I could escape my abusive captor. I spent 15 years in the sex trade being spit on and punched—my jaw was dislocated—and anally raped, all by my customers.

Prostitutes are looked at by most as disposable. These men believe there is an ownership when monies are exchanged and that we are all there for their pleasure, no matter how degrading, sick or violent that is. A person does not enter into the sex trade because she truly wants to or because she loves sex. She enters this dark world because of lack of choice. Whether it be coercion, physical force, financial, no education or lack of self-worth, whatever the reason, I have found that all of the women who I have worked with in and out of this so-called business had some form of abuse before ever entering. When you are traumatized and do not get help, something shifts in your brain.

Women and girls, even boys, are being lured into the sex trade. There are people who recruit girls into this by grooming them through what we call the “boyfriend” scenario, where a man will pay attention to a girl, shower her with gifts, and then she becomes so emotionally attached that he can convince her to become a prostitute. The even scarier part of this is, it does not just happen to vulnerable girls; it can happen to anyone. These men lure girls from bus stops, shelters, parties, group homes, social media and schools. They are predators.

Media plays a huge role in the exploitation of women. There are video games that have exploitation and violence against women in them. Music videos are all about sex and women, having a harem of scandalously dressed women draped around one man. Television and commercials are full of sexual innuendos. That is what our children are growing up with. Most children have access to an electronic device. Did you know that the average age of a child viewing porn is 11? Our boys are seeing women being degraded and sexually abused, and by the time they become sexually active, they believe this is what women like, and our girls believe this is what they are supposed to do.

The women I am working with now, who have either been human-trafficked or have left prostitution, are so damaged. All of the women I mentor suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or, like myself, complex post-traumatic stress disorder. You have to understand, when you are stuck in a world of sexual violence and abuse, you lose skills, if you had any before entering. Now your whole world is based on manipulation, lies and sex. Sooner or later, the facade you put on to be able to prostitute spills over into your personal life and you cannot separate the two anymore. You become addicted

to drugs in order to numb the realities of this job and hide your own shame.

When a woman gets out, she is like a child. She has to be taught how to live in a normal society and this is very hard. You have to teach these girls life skills, social skills, how to dress, lose the slang, build back self-confidence, teach them how to be a parent and job skills. It's insane, the damage that is done.

When I got out after 15 years, I thought that I would just jump right into a different work role and life itself. Was I ever wrong. Not only did I need to learn and relearn these skills, but I was filled with anger, hatred and I had serious trust and addiction issues. This healing does not happen overnight, it happens over a lifetime.

In saying all of this, this is where you come into play. We need long-term housing for these women. There is nowhere for them to go while they heal except shelters. Let me tell you that that is the worst place you can put a woman who has been exploited. First of all, the staff does not have a clue as to what these girls are going through or need. There are a lot of working girls in these places trying to recruit fresh meat, lots of drugs, and pimps are hanging around outside just waiting for these vulnerable people.

I can say this because, unfortunately, I have had to put all of the girls I helped in shelters. They call me crying because they are being triggered or the staff discriminates against these victims. Women are high, there is sexual abuse in some of these shelters and the list goes on.

Also, the welfare system is horrible. All of the women I am helping have had to go on assistance, which does not even allow you to pay for shelter. For a single person you receive \$667 a month. Where can you find a decent place and feed yourself? Let's not sugar-coat this: How do I say to a woman who is used to making a lot of money, “If you leave, I can help you”? What do we have to offer her? Nothing. Statistically, over 90% of women who are in the sex trade want out, but they don't know—and frankly, I don't know how to keep them out either when there is not enough support.

We need to stop this madness before it starts. Education is key. We need to be allowed to go into the schools—not just high schools, but elementary schools—and teach the students the red flags. We need to educate the public, the mothers and the fathers, about the warning signs—and the police, other social service agencies and NGOs. We need to train staff in shelters and hospitals—everywhere and anywhere that these victims may come into contact with someone. We need to educate on the harms of media and social media. This world is all about sex and everyone is buying.

We have to stop the brainwashing that is happening in our society, that women are less and that men hold this power and control. What if this were your daughter? Well, I'm somebody's daughter. It takes a whole system to raise a child, and we need to be that. We can stop the violence before it starts. We need to teach self-worth and to teach children that they can speak up if they are being abused and that these predators are just liars.

If we do not work together, we are going to have an up-and-coming generation of trauma. Instead of people looking at children as, “Oh, they are bad or smoking pot or drop-outs,” look at the underlying issues that have made them start to behave like this in the first place. I can guarantee there’s trauma there.

Victims should be allowed to receive immediate, basic assistance and support based on their individual needs that directly pertains to their sexual exploitation or abuse. The province of Ontario should implement support and assistance on medical care, legal services, support to deal with the psychological effects of the experience, and immediate care such as food, clothing and safe housing.

All assistance and support should be provided in a manner that does not increase the trauma suffered by the victim. Victims of sexual exploitation and abuse cause further damage or exclude or discriminate against other victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Assistance and support should be provided through existing services, programs and their networks. However, where necessary, the province of Ontario should consider supporting the development of new services while not developing or duplicating existing services. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Ms. MacLeod. Our first questions for you are from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you so very much. It really does help encompass some of the areas that we needed to know more about.

A quick question, then: In your estimation, what’s sort of the best practice in preventing sexual violence among women and men, I guess, in the sex trade?

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: I don’t think you really can prevent sexual violence in the sex trade. I’ve heard a lot of women complain, when Bill C-36 came into effect, that they needed time to be with their customers to make sure that they weren’t violent, to kind of screen them. It doesn’t matter. People are crazy, whether they’re crazy or not. I personally have had customers who I had seen for three years, four years, who were regular clients, and one day they just snapped and beat me up. So there’s no way to keep any woman in this industry safe.

1510

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Just to sort of end up with not having the industry.

The other thing that I was interested in in what you had to say is support for the victim. You’re looking at the support for somebody who’s been exploited in the sex trade for a long time as being just a little bit different from others who experience sexual violence or harassment?

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: Definitely. It’s totally different. Abuse is abuse, regardless of where it happens, how it happens, but when there’s sexual exploitation, there’s something that changes inside of you. There’s a shift in the way that you feel, in the way that you think, how you think men are. Your body is being used and degraded over and over again. You’re being raped every day for a service that is provided to men. So the long-

term damage that is happening to these women is very crucial, and I, being one of them, am still suffering and will probably suffer the rest of my life.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: What is a quick and immediate need?

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: Shelter.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our PC caucus. MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for the work you do. Thank you for sharing your story with us. I’ve actually been working on the human trafficking angle, which you spoke to later on in your presentation. It was brought through loud and clear in the meetings that I’ve been having that the shelter systems that exist now do not fit, and so that’s something that has to be addressed.

I’m actually going to debate a motion this Thursday—you’re more than welcome to come to the Legislature—about bringing in a provincial strategy to deal with human trafficking. We’ve heard, obviously, in the news the prominent stories that have come forward—and working with police services and victim services. It’s more complicated than what I’ve just stated, but I thank you for your work within that.

There are some good shelters, I know, in British Columbia. I know that we’re working on some in Ontario, and I know that the non-profits, the church groups, are involved. I’ve heard the very narrow window of time that you can reach these girls. It has to be done immediately.

I just wondered, from whichever angle you want to approach it, what is the best thing that you’ve seen that’s been out there with a type of enforcement or getting to these girls and giving them the option? You’ve said that 90% want out; 97%, I just want to tell you, are Canadian-born in human trafficking right now, which is a statistic that not many people know about.

Can you add anything to that? I know that you work with them—but just that short window of time that we have to reach these girls before their trafficker comes after them, because it’s minutes.

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: It is. It’s very crucial. Again, offering a girl a way out—there has to be a plan. There has to be something there for them. Where are we going to put them? This is the biggest struggle I have. If we don’t have a plan of action where these women can stay for the long term—it’s not short term; it’s long term. They need time to heal. They need support systems. Unless we have that, I don’t even offer them an out. It’s pointless. It’s better off for them to stay where they’re at than for me to bring them out and give them false hope, to where they’re going to have to go back in.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from our NDP caucus.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thanks very much for your presentation. I just want to give you an opportunity to have some final thoughts. I know we always miss some things we want to say, so you can have the final three minutes, I guess.

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: There are a lot of women who are trapped in sexual exploitation, whether it be human trafficking or a choice that they've made. Seeing these girls who really are trying to get out and the girls that I do end up getting out and have had to put in shelters, every day it's a struggle for me to convince them not to go back in. The money is the biggest issue. There's no housing. They feel alone. There's no support. Their families are unsupportive. Girls are getting their kids taken away from them. There's all kinds of situations happening around these women. It's very heart-breaking, because I know that if we had something in place for these women, they could make it. I know that 110%. I know that with all my heart.

My hope is to have a transitional home long term for these women, but that's going to take years. Until we can get something—if the province can give us something, I'll go in, I'll run it. I'll do it, because I know exactly what it's going to take for these women to come out, how their mind works and the trauma and how to deal with that.

If we were just given a chance to have something and everybody would take this as a serious issue—these people are not there because they want to be there. They're there because of lack of choice, and because of it they are traumatized.

I've only been out six years and I'm actually starting sex trauma therapy in two weeks, but it's taken me years even to get to this point, to be able to sit in front of people and feel like I'm kind of normal and talk. I'm now married, but these women don't have that hope. What I'm trying to give them is that hope, but it's discouraging when I say, "Okay, you can have all this, there is hope, but I have nothing to offer you in the meantime."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. MacLeod, we want to thank you very much for coming and speaking to our committee today. It's greatly appreciated.

Ms. Katarina MacLeod: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you to sit in our audience now, if you wish to.

Committee members, we are having some difficulty reaching our next presenter by teleconference, so we're going to move ahead to our next presenter.

BARBRA SCHLIFER COMMEMORATIVE CLINIC

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would ask that Amanda Dale come forward. Please take a seat. Make yourself comfortable. You've done this before, so you know what you're in for. Ms. Dale, you're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Begin anytime.

Ms. Amanda Dale: Sure. Thank you. Hello again, everyone. I'd be interested to hear also from you any points of clarification that it would be helpful for me to speak with you about, since you've obviously got a rich experience now which, in our first conversation, wasn't part of the mix.

I have spoken to this committee before about the pressing issues of access for multiply marginalized women. You know that that's the work that I'm familiar with and the work that our clinic does every day. You know that we see about 4,500 women a year who fit that profile, women for whom the criminal justice system is inaccessible and who have language barriers and all kinds of other barriers to accessing service. That's one of the reasons we're there.

I don't in any way want to detract from the direct experience of the survivors who have come before this committee by speaking about the institutions, but that's something that I want to do at this point: speak about the institutions that respond to the need.

In thinking about speaking to a multi-party committee on this issue, I want to make it clear that under every government that I have worked under in the sector for 30 years in Ontario, we have had challenges with respect to the stabilization of these services.

It is not a partisan issue. It is an issue of public service that I think all parties can have a role in speaking to when this committee reports back, and that is that if we are to address what is a pressing need in the province, we know for a fact that the incidents of last fall, which gave rise to this committee—we know how widespread they are and how unspoken they have been. Unless we address the shortfalls in the sector that is actually there to receive those women when they identify their issues, we are going to be in a bottleneck situation where we've raised awareness and we haven't raised access to the supports and services that are required to respond to either this public health issue or global pandemic or any of the names that can be given it, which are statistically grounded in the fact of how frequent an occurrence this is in Canada and around the world.

When I was last here, I spoke with you about Toronto in particular being a receiving centre for all forms of violence that occur against women around the world, and that part of our duty as a receiver of people who are building our country is to respond to the forms of violence that they have experienced globally; and that there's also, of course, the privatized forms of violence that are very common here behind closed doors in domestic violence and sexual abuse situations.

All these forms of violence do come forward to the service sector that delivers on the government goals to respond. Over the last 15 years, we've had very good relationships with government in terms of policy-setting, in terms of these kinds of conversations identifying gaps, having a common agenda to deal with this issue, but we have not seen a corresponding investment in the sector that makes up for the attrition of 15 years of rising costs. So although an agency like my own, as an example, and we're certainly not the only ones in this position, is funded—and has been through the last 30 years, so several different governments, through four or five different ministries—to deliver different aspects of the violence-against-women agenda of the province, we are continuously in a mode of trying to ensure annually that we can actually keep the lights on.

1520

So as a crucial service that serves up to 5,000 women a year and that is often a spokesperson at public policy tables, the dichotomy that I see is between the high regard in which we are held for the services we deliver and for the expertise that we offer on the one hand, and the attitude of the funding formula, which communicates that we are seen as well-meaning volunteers. So we are on the one hand experts, and on the other hand paid as volunteers. I want to be really clear that I see this as an aspect of the stability or instability of the response we have to the folks that have come out and been brave enough to speak to you across the province about their experiences.

When I have a wait-list—my numbers, for instance, have gone up from 2010 until now. The requests for service have gone up by about 70%. I think we saw 3,200 women a year when I started at the clinic in 2010, so five years later this month, in fact, and we've seen over 5,000 women in the last year, with no increase in actual infrastructure.

The reason I'm bringing this to your attention—this is not in self-interest. If you looked at my salary, you would know this is not self-interest. This is about the stability of the sector that is being asked to respond to an ever-growing awareness. As we have an ever-growing awareness, we see a deeper complexity of the issues that women are bringing forward. These are not met by the goals of cheaper, faster, better, which is the kind of public policy framework that we have seen develop in the last 10 or 15 years: Do more with less. Nobody can do more with less like our sector. The amount of chewing gum and spit that sort of joins together the parts really is a lesson for the corporate sector in how to be resourceful, although our business model would not make a profit for anyone.

The profits, of course, are social. I think we're being torn in two very separate policy directions. One is that not-for-profits are being encouraged to be more like business, with business being assumed to be a model of efficiency. So on the one hand, as the ratio between government investment in the work that we do is on the decline relative to cost—even if you put it against inflation, even if you stabilize and do not cut the amounts of money we're getting, and you put that against rising costs, you're seeing an erosion of service. So in the context of an erosion of service and asking for greater efficiency, you are inviting the danger of gapping between a thorough job of assessing danger and assessing response from the perspective of danger, and a throughput system where you're counting numbers and just trying to respond to the volume at the front end.

I want to be really clear that what we're talking about is a conversation with government about how to set priorities that can last across changes in government, that will look at this issue, which I think all parties agree is a public policy issue, and look at a stabilization of how this funding works. You can't have one ministry pulling in one direction and another ministry pulling in another

direction on a single issue and have one ministry perhaps destabilizing the programs of another ministry, because there is no across-government purpose in how we're developing this sector.

I don't think there's any argument that that's not an efficient way to fund your public policy outputs, but I think there needs to be political will behind it, to be able to erase some of those disarticulations between the different ministries that actually share the responsibility for responding to the issue of violence against women.

In the context, as I said, of every single party that is represented here having been a government at some point during the time that I've had these experiences, I think we can agree that this is not about an individual mandate. It's about a structural issue, supporting a sector that is responding to a public policy problem.

If we look at the ratio of money that goes into formalized health care, for instance, as opposed to community-based care, we see an inverse ratio of where prevention could happen, where crisis has already occurred and we're intervening a little too far upstream, with a lot of money, after problems have developed.

That's my kind of snapshot agency perspective on some of the issues that you will be hearing, as front-line personal issues that need a response structurally to be able to actually change the nature of victims' experiences in the future.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Ms. Dale. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus: MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thanks for returning. I'm quite interested in the shift that you've seen in your own agency, because, from a personal standpoint, I've seen it with my own agencies operating in Dufferin-Caledon. They talk to me about the more complex issues that women are coming in with. So 15 years ago, they didn't need someone on staff who necessarily had mental health or addictions specialities. Now they're needing that, just because of who they're attempting to help. I'm interested in whether you have found the same thing.

I'm also interested in—because we all understand that there has been a freeze, and there have been pressures through pay equity, through expanded service; we can all list them. Have you had to shift, from a management standpoint, how much fundraising or outside-of-government funding you were looking for, as your funding from government has stayed consistent?

Ms. Amanda Dale: Those are very insightful questions. The answer to your first question is yes. We have noticed an increase in complexity in all areas of service. We have always offered mental health services of some sort, so it's not new to deal with the issues that come up in the context of trauma or lifetime trauma, and they are inherently complex. However, the nature of the desperation of the complexity has shifted qualitatively.

The research on this is very thin, so what I'm going to tell you now is my observation, verified by no one except my colleagues who I share my observations with: There has been some erosion also in the standard of living of

the women who are coming to us, either through downward turns in their area of the economy or because of erosion of social assistance rates, or any combination of the above. They have lived in deeper poverty for longer, and so the issues that they're coming forward with are more complex and more entrenched. Their responses to try and survive those circumstances are often more embedded in areas that you're indicating. Mental health and addictions issues are more at the fore of what they're identifying.

In the case of our legal services, again, our legal services have always dealt with the complex intersections between different areas of law when violence against women is present. Most lawyers, as you know, practise in an area of law and know its bounds very well, but when an issue is identified in violence against women, it generally involves multiple areas of law, where, if you don't understand the issue of violence against women, you might give advice that was pertinent to somebody in one area of law that might actually harm them in their claims in another area of law. So the intersection between family and immigration is an excellent example of that.

1530

We are seeing increased complexity in the cases above and beyond the legal complexity that I've identified. There are additionally more issues around outstanding orders or, again, entrenched legal problems that have gone on unaddressed for a very long time, so that by the time we're seeing women, the urgency is absolutely paramount. This changes the nature of the service, if you follow this sequence through, so that you are now using more time for an individual whose issues are more complex than for somebody who has a routine issue.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thanks, Ms. Dale. It's great to see you again. Thanks for coming back. To summarize your deputation, I would say that you are asking us to find more resources to devote to sexual assault and sexual harassment. Some would say that you can't simply throw money at a problem and expect to fix it; I would say this is exactly the type of problem that you could throw money at and expect to fix it. My question to you is very simple: Where do we find that money? Where would you suggest we find that money? Thank you.

Ms. Amanda Dale: I think I am saying that, but I'm saying more than that as well. I'm trying to look at how, even if we don't invest more, we can stabilize the nature of the funding. The amount of time spent administratively in defending, applying, reapplying, dealing with the instability of year-to-year funding in a place that's been offering service for 30 years, seems to me an absurd use of my time. That's one thing.

I have some ideas about sources of money which I'm not necessarily super keen on putting at this table, but I think at a table that we were invited to to have a policy discussion—I think there are some hidden pockets of public funds that are going into parts of the system that could be better used. I don't necessarily think that that

granular level of discussion is helpful here, but they do exist and I think solutions are there. But I do think the nature of the structure of the funding is inherently problematic, and a great deal could be done—revenue-neutral—just to stabilize the existing funding so that it isn't a scramble to justify your existence every year.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Thank you very much. The final questions for you are from our Liberal caucus: MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you again for being here. I want to get a little bit further away from funding and I want to talk to you about, outside of funding, what else do you think we could do to make it easier for survivors?

Ms. Amanda Dale: In relation to?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: To reporting—to everything; the whole experience. How can we support our survivors outside of—not just the financial aspect of it but everything else? What services could we provide?

Ms. Amanda Dale: My response is going to be two-part. One is that if we aren't looking—and I know treasury has a kibosh on any expansion of public spending, so in that context, I would be wary of spreading existing public resources even thinner. I would want to look at where we already have some stability and some good results, and try to expand those interventions.

One of my observations, which I think I shared with this committee some while back, is that we've had a very good result by having an accompaniment process through the Family Court system for victims of domestic violence.

The risk factors, as we know, in the aftermath of domestic violence when a family matter is involved and before the courts really prompted us to lobby for some sort of supportive network of professionals that would be able to guide a woman through the Family Court process, where she's at highest risk, and ensure that she had the proper supports that already exist. So no new additional supports, but the support itself of someone who knows those supports and can connect her to them.

Something similar for the criminal justice system makes sense to me. I know we have some existing institutional partners who are adjunct to the police, who are funded through MAG, but I'm talking about community-based resources where women who are not accessing the traditional services and women who are repelled by the adversarial nature of the criminal justice system in their claims would have some appropriate and realistic support for what they can expect from that system and how to navigate it.

Ultimately, I would love to see women have some independent legal representation. There are reasons why that's not going to necessarily fly, but I think some kind of additional support that's community based, that mirrors the successes we've had with family court and, I would say, also with immigration processes through the shelters and through the community-based women's services.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Dale, thank you very much for coming and speaking again to our committee. We really appreciate it.

Ms. Amanda Dale: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you're interested, you may join our audience as we are continuing with our witnesses now.

Committee members, just so you know, we have had difficulty reaching Sherry Anderson, who we were trying to contact by telephone, so we're going to reschedule her for another day. We're going to continue now with our witnesses.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF ONTARIO

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would call for the representatives from the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario.

Please make yourself comfortable. You're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee and that will be followed by questions for you. Begin by stating your names, and start any time.

Ms. Mary Potter: My name is Mary Potter and I'm president of the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: I'm Thelma McGillivray, vice-president of status of women with the Provincial Council of Women of Ontario.

Ms. Mary Potter: The Provincial Council of Women of Ontario was founded in 1923 as an affiliate of the National Council of Women of Canada, which was founded in 1893, and the International Council of Women, which was established in 1888.

The Provincial Council of Women is an umbrella group for local councils, and they're established in London, Ottawa, St. Catharines, Toronto, and there's a study group in Oakville. It's also an umbrella group for provincially organized societies—we have eight of them. Some examples are Business and Professional Women's Clubs of Ontario, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, the Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association and the Ontario Home Economics Association.

PCWO presents its brief annually to the government of Ontario, bringing to the government's attention matters of concerns that have been studied by many Ontarians. We always look forward to a dialogue with the appropriate ministers or their representatives and to the responses of other political parties on the content of our resolutions and our ongoing issues, which are presented in our brief.

PCWO is a non-partisan, self-funded group of unpaid volunteers who have a wide variety of skills, knowledge, expertise and experience. We thank the select committee and their staff for the opportunity to speak with you today on a matter that has been a concern for a long time with the provincial council, specifically regarding the prevention of violence against women, men and children. We especially appreciate your openness to hear from groups, such as ours, as volunteers.

The following list is offered as an example of our resolutions pertaining to this issue that we have studied to make recommendations to the government of Ontario: in 1984, sexual education; 1998, sexual harassment in the workplace; 2000, education of parents; 2006, prevention of violence against aboriginal women on and off the reserve; 2007, rental housing rights for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking; and also in 2007, psychological harassment in the workplace.

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This past year, we sent letters to the government covering an assortment of public concerns. Among these were our concerns about sexual harassment in the workplace and psychological harassment in the workplace. In order to raise awareness, we asked the Premier to prominently post her government's policy on sexual harassment and sexual assault in every department within government.

Media coverage of sexual harassment and sexual assault on university campuses stated the shocking revelation that only nine out of 78 national universities, and none of the 24 public colleges, had policies or procedures on the sexual harassment and sexual assault of students and staff. More alarming was the lack of resources to help those who alleged that they had been assaulted, forcing these students to leave their studies. Indeed, there did not appear to be any prevention strategies in place.

In response, some of our members wrote individual letters to their alma maters to register their concern with regard to this criminal behaviour and to inquire if they had policies, procedures and prevention strategies in place and, if not, urging that these must be their priorities in the near future.

PCWO has also endorsed the Up for Debate campaign of a blueprint for a national action plan on violence against women and girls.

We commend the Premier and the minister responsible for women's issues in their commitment towards working to end such violence against women, and for the formation of this select committee and offering the PCWO the opportunity to present our views toward eliminating such violence for the purpose of developing recommendations.

However, this is also an opportunity to express our disappointment that for the last 17 years, and we are here today addressing exactly the same concern—17 years, which equals one generation of youth, for this unwelcome behaviour, sexual violence and harassment, to continue.

Based on overwhelming fact-finding evidence from numerous organizations in addition to ours, this scourge has become even more repellent and more overt. In fact, this behaviour is endemic, not only in our workplaces, but in our many public institutions, including our schools, our House of Commons, our military forces, our police forces, our long-term-care homes, our foster homes, our sport organizations and on the Internet.

Indeed, it is also in our own homes by those we trust, and by online predators who no longer hide in the bushes. Instead, they trick and prey upon our children, who are unlikely to tell their parents. These are all places that women, men and children deserve to live and/or work safely, free from hostile and violent behaviour.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: I also thank you. Good afternoon.

I want to share with you some of my own personal and professional experiences. I became a member of PCWO through my work with the Hamilton and District Council of Women in 1988, 27 years ago. I volunteered for different positions because this organization addresses issues that were, and are, relevant to my life experience both personal and professional.

On a personal level, I am a survivor of violence—I didn't expect that, sorry. Excuse me.

I have worked since the age of 14 in a variety of employment. I experienced unwanted sexual touching and harassment from my employers and colleagues, which was a common occurrence among my peers. I, like them, didn't confront them. I quit my job and found another only for the same thing to happen again.

Years later, while earning three university degrees—a BA in sociology, a bachelor's in social work and my master's in social work—as a mature student, younger women, students, came to me for advice because our professor was coming on to them. Yesterday being Mother's Day, I heard from my three daughters, who are all university graduates, and I asked them the same question. They all admitted, "Yes, that happened," but they kept quiet about it. Not to them personally, but they knew about that happening.

During my employ in a variety of social service agencies working with families, I came to understand the many connections between my own early environment and theirs with its entrenched sexist and ageist attitudes that endorse a "spare the rod and spoil the child" philosophy and the socially accepted total power and control of the head of the family, impressed upon children through legal violent spanking behaviour. It was also understood that you must have deserved it.

I worked with many individuals and families that experienced different forms of dysfunctional behaviours that made their lives miserable. Today, I want to share some examples in the area of my profession that are relevant to this select committee. My work in the 1980s and onward until my retirement in 2005 and my ongoing volunteer work during that time and now have been connected to government policy, in particular how it impacts on women and children. As a case worker and subsequently a front-line department head in child abuse for a children's aid society, I and my staff assessed and intervened into many family situations. We need to remind ourselves that in the 1980s, child sexual abuse was not categorized but lumped in with neglect.

A classic example of going beyond one's role was a case that called for extraordinary intervention. I received a phone call from the sister-in-law of a woman who

confided that she suffered from violent sexual abuse. The victim was also the mother of two young children, so I was concerned, but I convinced the woman that unless the mother phoned me to complain, I could not help. Thankfully, she did phone me, and her sister-in-law brought her and her two children into the agency early one morning. The woman did not speak English, so I called on a staff person who was able to translate her story. In private, with her children out of the room, she exposed her breasts, which were bruised and bitten to the point of infection. She was terrified of her husband, even to make a phone call because when he came home, he would demand to know who she was talking to, and he would beat her. She said he raped her every night, and she wanted to kill herself. I called the agency's doctor, who looked after her immediately and who also consulted with a psychiatrist, who called the police. The father was picked up when he returned from work and was institutionalized for a 30-day mental health assessment. The mother and children were safely returned to their apartment where she was connected to the local sexual assault centre for ongoing support. We did all of this in one day.

Without this type of intervention, two children would have been apprehended unnecessarily for their protection. The mother learned that the health and legal system was there to help her and provide for her needs. A horrible situation was stopped.

Since that time, I've advocated that it is appropriate for the aggressor to be removed from the home, not the mother and the children. I share this experience with the committee to demonstrate that there is great intervention work done, when called for, which goes on daily by social workers and other professionals who are not curtailed by their mandate. But we need the laws to back it up.

Violence was an event that happened in my work often. For instance, during my work as a mediator in Family Court assisting divorced parents with their parenting agreement, one of my woman clients was stalked and shot by her ex-spouse after she left the building. The mothers of children who have alleged they were abused by their father or stepfather were often forced by court order to take them to spend time with that other parent; if she did not, she ran the risk of losing custody of and/or access to her children.

In my private practice as a family therapist, I dealt with clients under employee assistance programs, and I also did a lot of pro bono work. One woman confessed she was in a relationship of rough sex that led to being choked, which frightened her very much. The woman knew it was wrong, but she refused to report the aggressor because she blamed herself.

This was not pleasant work, but it was work that I was trained to do. I hope I made a positive difference in their lives, if it was only to help them to remove themselves from harm.

Mary?

Ms. Mary Potter: In closing, PCWO, through our recommendations, has communicated with the govern-

ment to address certain issues that may require a new or updated policy. Today, we have attempted to make connections between the current sexual violence and harassment, and the past neglect of governments to endorse, legislate and enforce what has been required for many years to prevent such crimes.

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At the same time, we firmly commend this government for its action plan to address this unwanted, hostile behaviour, recognizing that it will not change overnight. We also strongly commend the government for the introduction of a new and up-to-date sex education curriculum in Ontario schools to start in September of this year. We are hopeful and think that this is an essential program that will bring about important social change.

Studies have shown that the earlier a child is taught to respect themselves and others and learns to have a healthy relationship with the opposite sex, the more positive their attitude will be towards one another as they grow older. Having workshops for parents to work with the schools would be helpful to back up what is being taught in the schools.

We still have to deal with the current situation of sexual assault and harassment, and from our policies we recommend the following:

(1) Reduce sexual harassment in the workplace by posting sexual harassment policies in a prominent place.

(2) Designate sexual harassment as a workplace hazard under the Ontario health and safety act.

(3) Allow a victim of sexual assault or stalking to end a lease or rental agreement with 14 days' notice, do not require the agreement of another person who co-signed the lease in order to terminate the lease—because the other person who may have shared the lease is the person who is doing the assaulting—and allow the locks to be changed without the permission of the landlord so that they can be changed quickly.

(4) Ensure that the police are trained to react appropriately to domestic sexual assaults.

PCWO is hopeful that once this younger generation of children become the adults of the future, they will be the changing force for more equitable, respectful and dignified attitudes between genders and cultures. We also hope that the sexual harassment and sexual assault of women, men and children will be part of our regrettable history.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to address these urgent issues.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for presenting your information to this committee. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: First, I'd like to thank you both, Mary and Thelma, for coming on behalf of the PCWO to present. Thank you, Thelma, for sharing your story. I think we all need the reminder of the lifelong effects that sexual harassment can have on people; it certainly is very traumatic. I'm sorry that you had to go through that in your lifetime.

You guys originally highlighted, in the first aspect of your presentation, about post-secondary education and

how it was surprising that a very small amount of institutions actually have a policy in place for sexual harassment. So could I ask you: What would be some of the recommendations or steps that you could suggest that would help the post-secondary education sector maybe move forward in that direction?

Ms. Mary Potter: Do you want to address that?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Because that seems to be a neglected area that has been highlighted recently.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: I'm not sure I understand your question. What more could be—

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Yes, what are some ideas you might have to help the post-secondary education system or institutions start thinking about implementing those policies—like, I think nine out of 28, you mentioned, have some policies. How can we get the others on board or get that started?

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: Well, I'm glad you asked that question because it's quite alarming to think that our funded universities and colleges have not been required previously to have that covered. It was very shocking to discover that. I'm happy that the media covered that and made us aware. I think it's important for everyone just to individually have their voices heard on that, especially those of us who have children and grandchildren in university.

But other than bringing it to the attention of those authorities, in particular the government that does the funding of those schools, I'm not too sure what else we can do about it. We can talk to each other. I think it's important to tell stories. It's not easy to tell your story, but that's important.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi, Thelma, nice to see you; nice to meet you. Thank you for coming. This is extremely powerful. The historical aspect of the conversation that we're having now is particularly important to remember—I say that for those of us sitting around the table who have grey hair—yet we continue to have these issues.

I'm going to ask you a little bit more, building on my colleague's question, about the university sector, with which you're both familiar. I know, Thelma, you work with the Canadian Federation of University Women, too.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: Well, I'm a member, yes.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes. If we're still having issues—and we're hearing this from some of our hearings across the province—are there perhaps any further suggestions from you around university campuses? The issue of consent seems to still be one of complicated conversation. We're hearing that. Are there any insights you might have on that conversation about consent and why it's still a pervasive issue, and “he said, she said,” and it's a barrier to report and so on?

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: Well, I think it sounds a little trite to say that I don't think anyone consents to be sexually assaulted and raped. I think that, given the age

groups on university campuses, they're young and vulnerable. It's very difficult to get into university. I know it was very difficult for me, given my background. I had a 0.4% chance of getting into university. But I had come through an earlier divorce. I paid my whole way through there. It's very difficult now for these people. It's just such a challenge, really, to be able to stay in a class and at the same time report. I have students come to me, as I said, saying the same thing. There isn't very much that they can do about it if they want to continue there.

Those support systems have to be there and be evident to everyone on campus; also, that they're not going to become a target because they report. We can well understand that it's easier to walk away.

So if there was that kind of an enforcement—I think, too, it has to be very publicly signed everywhere. I know they get funding in certain areas, but some universities have chosen to improve lighting or cut down bushes. I think some of that money has to go into support services.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from our PC caucus. MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for coming forward today and your years of dedication. It was 1984 that the provincial council started and the—

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: It was 1923. We're only 92.

Ms. Laurie Scott: All right. Well, I guess you've just been making recommendations since 1984, so I thank you for that.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: My personal belonging to PCWO is since 1988.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: I don't know about Mary.

Ms. Laurie Scott: You can tell us, Mary.

Ms. Mary Potter: It's been probably 35 years, whatever date that is.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: We watch you on TV all the time, I want you to know. I'm a question period addict.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My apologies.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: We come to you every—

Ms. Mary Potter: Every November.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray:—every November with our semi-annual meetings, so you'll see us again.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay, that's wonderful. I appreciate that.

I'll take just a little bit of a tack that may include some of what was discussed before. I had mentioned earlier in the day about human trafficking and bringing in a resolution. I know that we were talking about universities and colleges in some of the meetings that I've had too. It's interesting: Some of the ladies that are human-trafficked are from universities.

Anyway, I just wondered if you had anything to add about the human trafficking component in anything that you've come across before.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: Mary, do you have a comment? Well, I'll start. I watched the federal com-

mittee on C-36 and I paid a lot of attention to that. But it did occur to me that we do have a lot of criminal code already on the books to look after a lot of that.

The human trafficking: We're aware even in our own community that it has happened. I don't know really how we can put up barriers other than to welcome people who are new to our country, because a lot of them are victims of that. What more could we do except to teach children to be very aware of their own bodies, that they have a right to speak out, that they have a right to talk to people?

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When I was with children's aid, this was one of the things that we were working on all the time: to help these children learn that no one was allowed to touch their bodies. But in those days, it was mainly the children's aid services that did that. I think the more awareness, the more education there is on it, the more it helps, and we have to help those young people who are trapped in that and make sure—we heard a young woman earlier saying how difficult it was to get out of the sex trade, and that's the beginning of it. Although this is provincial, I don't think the \$20 million that was offered at the federal level is even going to touch that problem.

I hope that answers something.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. McGillivray and Ms. Potter, thank you both very much for coming here today and informing this committee. Keep tuning in to question period. It is the original reality show, as you know. Thanks, ladies.

Ms. Thelma McGillivray: Yes. It is to listen to the policy; I'm not too interested in the back-and-forth.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you to join our audience if you wish to and to continue listening to our presenters this afternoon.

SEIU HEALTHCARE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on the SEIU Healthcare Canada representative to come forward. Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable.

You will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions from our committee members. Start by stating your names and begin anytime.

Ms. Brenda Snider: I'm Brenda Snider. I'm the provincial workplace safety representative from SEIU Healthcare.

Ms. Natasha Luckhardt: I'm Natasha Luckhardt, research associate with SEIU Healthcare.

Ms. Brenda Snider: We are a labour union that represents over 55,000 front-line health care workers throughout Ontario, nearly 90% of whom are women. Madam Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the committee, thank you for accommodating us this afternoon to share with you the voices of front-line workers and the stories of sexual abuse, violence and harassment in the workplace that are all too often kept quiet.

On behalf of SEIU Healthcare, we would like to commend this government and all members of this committee for engaging in this constructive process of con-

sulting with women, men, students, aboriginal groups, not-for-profit organizations and workers.

All of us are affected by sexual violence and harassment. It happens in bars, on campuses, in our homes and in the workplace. Today, of those participating in this consultation, SEIU Healthcare would like to bring the voices of front-line health care workers to this conversation, since almost one in five incidents of violent abuse in Canada occurs in the workplace. Again, that's almost one in five incidents of violent abuse in Canada that occur in the workplace.

For me, for SEIU Healthcare, for our over 55,000 members, this is not merely a statistic. Statistics ignore the pain and suffering experienced by workers alone. With statistics alone, we are made to believe in some transactional event that starts with the abuser and ends with the abused, but by listening to workers, we know that sexual violence and harassment in the workplace have further implications on their families and the patients for whom they care so deeply and so professionally.

In the following stories, I have taken deliberate steps to protect all parties involved, will maintain their anonymity and privacy and will omit important details. I will not share the names of the worker, patient, employer or location of the incident.

The first story is that of a nurse. As she was walking a patient down the hospital corridor, she was violently shoved up against a wall, and in that moment the patient groped her and then wrapped his hands around her throat. She cried out for help but no one heard her, and so no one came to her aid. This is not an uncommon story of the male-female power struggle between patients and workers.

Another member, who already deals with domestic violence in her personal life, spends time caring for a patient who repeatedly tells her he's going to rape her and cut off her head. At home, away from the public, and at work, serving the public, she's in constant fear of abuse, sexual violence and harassment.

In both these stories, the employer said that since there was no medical treatment sought and no lost time, there was, by definition, no injury, yet these workers suffered an invisible emotional injury and, as is all too common, did not take further steps with the employer for fear they would lose their jobs.

As you know, front-line health care is delivered in a multitude of settings. Some are more public places, like hospitals, and others more isolated, like in a home.

A PSW who worked in a long-term-care facility was providing for a patient who was known to be an aggressive resident, and he punched her in the stomach. This member and her husband were looking forward to the birth of their child in a few months' time. With the punch into the stomach, she had a miscarriage. She suffered an emotional injury no one should ever have to experience.

Another is when a home care worker was in the course of performing her duties and a client sharply bit down on her hand. He tore her hand open like this. Many of her female co-workers have been bitten by the same client—

a client deserving and in need of professional care, but a client who, nonetheless, is known to dislike women and targets females only. Remember, this is a client who targets females in an industry that is overwhelmingly represented by women.

In my capacity as SEIU's provincial WSIB workplace safety representative, I sat at a member's kitchen table with a group of front-line workers from a group home who told me chilling accounts of violence. Since the workers are entering the clients' homes, knives are not locked up, and workers told stories of having everything from pitchforks to axes thrown at them. One of the women suffered a punch in the head for simply entering the home, and she was gripped by the mouth and jaw, and pulled down to the ground.

Committee, it should be noted for the record that it is just the second week of May, and all these events have happened since January, most of them towards women. Considering four out of five workers say they had unwanted experiences which they did not report to their employers, you can imagine who remained and continues to remain silent.

SEIU Healthcare is eager to work with all parties involved to ensure that measures are made to break the silence. While imperfect, Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act offers a legislative framework to help break the silence. Further amending section 23 of the OHSA was an extremely important step in the right direction as far as outlining the forms of violence and the worker's responsibility to report and address incidents.

It's Never Okay, the Ontario government's newly released action plan on sexual violence and harassment, adds another much-needed development to the discussion, and it is commendable as far as opening up discussions about rape culture, gendered violence, indigenous issues and sexual assault.

Issues raised in the report, such as the pervasive culture of sexual violence in the workplace and on campuses—it's especially impressive, as there has been an overwhelming silence in these areas.

It is the position of SEIU Healthcare that recommendations are swiftly put into practice and that all of the commitments are followed up with, such as training and enforcement.

Before we provide further recommendations, it is important to situate the issues of violence in the workplace, both of a sexual and non-sexual nature, with the larger context of workplace dynamics.

Some of the key barriers to workers coming forward are the fear of repercussion, the lack of job security, language and culture hurdles, staff retention and turnover, gaps in scheduling, stigma and a larger culture of violence. For these reasons, workplace violence has become one of the largest occupational health and safety issues today. We've referred to both sexual and non-sexual at times, as the issues are not mutually exclusive.

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At SEIU Healthcare, we believe it is important not just to highlight changes, but to provide solutions. With that said, our recommendations for your report are:

- mandatory training and ongoing assessment of staff's knowledge of the training material;

- ensure services are provided in a culturally sensitive manner and in a variety of languages to reflect Ontario's ethnic diversity;

- acknowledge that violence can be perpetrated by anyone, including coworkers, strangers, supervisors and managers;

- acknowledge emotional injuries resulting from harassment of both a sexual and a non-sexual nature as compensable injuries;

- reinforce an employer's accountability to prevent workplace violence and follow the mandatory steps outlined in section 23 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act when a violent act occurs;

- ensure that, if enforcement teams are used, the protocol of the team will be limited to addressing breaches of the OHSA. They should not override the jurisdiction of the police or emergency services, as the incident may be of a criminal nature and therefore would require a criminal investigation;

- emphasize the need for victims of violence to file a formal report, and provide them supports to do so without fear of job loss; and

- ensure that those who suffer from mental illnesses are cared for by appropriate staff in appropriate settings and that facility changes occur when necessary.

Furthermore, there is a growing need to ensure that a culture of safety is ingrained in the infrastructure of our many health care settings. The most impressive recommendations have been put forward by the Public Services Health and Safety Association, a provincially funded initiative. We support the implementation of the following measures:

- flagging of patients who exhibit aggressive behaviour;

- equipping staff with personal response devices appropriate for their setting;

- providing enhanced security conducive for that setting;

- conducting client risk assessments; and

- conducting organizational risk assessments.

Not only are these measures designed to create a safe environment for the workers, but also for the patients, who have an equal right to a safe environment. Patients are there to be served and cared for by the health care system. Therefore, we do the people of Ontario a disservice by not ensuring front-line workers are adequately supported, and we do the front line an injustice by providing that "We've done enough." We wouldn't be here today if we'd done enough. Again, we commend this government and all members of this committee for acknowledging that more is needed.

Finally, we recommend the creation of a permanent round table, including labour, employers, government, police and others who have a contribution to make to discussions of workplace sexual violence and harassment. The creation of the section 21 committee by this government was a great initiative, and we hope a similar

dialogue can be created to ensure continued collaboration, solutions and actions.

In conclusion, we are not interested in pointing a finger at any one person, any one politician or any one government, past or present. The conditions as they exist today are the responsibility of us all, and we believe it will take all of us to make continued improvements to stop sexual violence and harassment in the workplace.

As I mentioned earlier, nearly 90% of our membership is women, yet many managers are men. And how many health care CEOs are men? Frankly, how many MPPs are men? For the first time in our province's history, we have a female Premier, and we are long overdue to make progress for health care workers, who are repeatedly faced with incidents of sexual violence and harassment and repeatedly encouraged to remain silent in the workplace because it's just easier.

As the work of this committee concludes, we ask that the work of consultation continue. Saying "It's never okay" necessarily requires a comprehensive strategy. We can work to stop sexual violence and harassment inside and outside of the workplace, but plans to stop it in one environment without plans to stop it in all environments will see this societal scourge continue to creep in the dark shadows that we ignore.

You can count on SEIU's over 55,000 front-line health care workers and their families to join you in a collective force in this effort. We thank you for this opportunity to speak today, and I'm happy to take questions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first set of questions for you is from our Liberal caucus. MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much for your presentation. As a long-time nurse, I worked in community and I also worked as a care coordinator most recently, before I was elected. I know that health care workers are particularly vulnerable at home. I heard of lots of situations as a care coordinator of patients who were sexually abusing—or trying to—or harassing the workers. Sometimes we would send in male workers, and if that didn't work, then we'd have to pull them from service. So it's a particular vulnerability, because there's nobody else there.

What recommendations would you have for insisting that employers take these incidents seriously and also to protect their workers and provide services in the event that they're exposed to something like that?

Ms. Brenda Snider: That has to be something that we all strive for. At the moment, I actually am sitting on the PSHSA initiative steering committee. If we were able to put forth all of the toolkits that are being put together instead of having somebody put them on a shelf to gather dust—it's a tool to help employers and workers and other organizations, labour as well, to help the workers within those settings.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: What about recommendations to prevent sexual violence and harassment in the workplace in general?

Ms. Brenda Snider: In general? I'm not prepared to answer that today. That's more to sit at a round table and discuss further with all parties involved.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our PC caucus. MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you. I appreciate your recommendations and suggestions.

I wanted to get a little more detail on the client risk assessment. I can see how that would be quite valuable in longer-term settings—long-term care, group homes, that type of setting. I can also see it being more challenging in a hospital setting, where the turnover would traditionally be quicker, faster—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Jones, could you speak up more? Our audio person is having difficulty hearing you.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Okay—and how it relates to FIPPA, the freedom of information and protection of privacy. How do we get an accurate client risk assessment knowing that we have the FIPPA legislation and the traditionally very quick turnover that happens in a hospital setting?

Ms. Brenda Snider: Actually, the initiative that I'm sitting on right now with PSHSA—it is being piloted with different employers, and it's also being applied to the acute hospital setting. You still need to do an assessment of a patient, regardless of the quick turnover. With that assessment comes the other tools—the flagging also.

When you talk about FIPPA, we also, in that group, were able to get a legal opinion on FIPPA and the constraints of confidentiality that will help employers. That is also a part of the toolkit; it can be used by any employer.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you for your presentation. Thank you also for the representation that you provide to your members on the front line. It's definitely valued. I know first-hand from speaking with many of your members that they appreciate the broad support they receive.

My question is specifically around your third recommendation, to acknowledge emotional injuries as compensable injuries. Could you elaborate on that and where you see or how you see that playing out? Would it be through the WSIA?

Ms. Brenda Snider: Currently, if a worker is—and we can have further discussion on this as well at another time. But currently, WSIB doesn't cover cumulative emotional injuries, and we find that most unfortunate.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: So you'd like to see reforms to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to reflect personal injuries as being compensable injuries?

Ms. Brenda Snider: Yes, that would be a discussion we would like to enter into.

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Mr. Taras Natyshak: Very good. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and speaking to our committee this afternoon. We invite you now, if you wish, to sit with our audience as we continue with our presentations.

BRIDGENORTH

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on the representative from BridgeNorth to come forward.

Please have a seat, make yourself comfortable. You will have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. Begin by stating your name, and start any time after that.

Ms. Casandra Diamond: My name is Casandra Diamond, and I thank you for the invitation to be with you today and join in on the discussion of sexual violence and harassment. I'm the founder of BridgeNorth. It's an organization that exists to renew and restore the inherent value and dignity of all persons involved in the sex trade, whether they have been trafficked or simply prostituted.

I want to focus in on one specific aspect. By narrowing our focus on structural violence by way of municipally licensed adult facilities, I'm hoping to contribute to a deeper understanding of its significant harms and how sexual violence and harassment promises to continue if we do not intervene in this structure. I am by no means trying to exclude or minimize others who are involved in the sex trade through non-licensed avenues. I'm speaking about women who are involved through escort agencies, cam girls or Internet girls, or condo or apartment bordellos. I must inform you that sexual violence is endured by all women in the sex trade.

I know of a case where a teenager engaged in survival sex—a victim of childhood sexual abuse—was in the Toronto core for personal reasons. The young teen used drugs to cope, and she stopped off at a drug dealer who told her to hold on while he reloaded. Really what he had done was gone and called a pimp who came and picked her up with three of his buddies in a truck and drove her around Toronto in a van raping her and recording it. At that point, they gave her enough drugs to incapacitate her. They dropped her off at a place where men were already waiting to buy her. She was very clearly a child and she was very clearly unable to give consent—not that she could have because of her age. These men were still purchasing her.

This kind of sexual violence is not uncommon for any girls and women in the sex trade. Many other women I know had pimps as well, and they had quotas that they had to meet. If they fell short, there were often violent consequences, including being raped, burnt, beaten and whipped, their children being threatened and removed from them, then forced out of their living areas until they made their quotas. I could speak about the numerous abductions, hospital visits, drug overdoses, suicides and murders that these women endure on a daily basis.

An outdoor woman is taught to walk around the car that she's entering to make sure there's no one inside and to make sure that there's no weapons inside. This is essentially actually making any violence her fault. Any indoor woman who's in a massage setting—they're lined up and they're paraded before a buyer who then selects them. She does not have a choice to say no. Plying the trade indoors often means more pimp control and with no place for the person to turn to for help. Owners, managers and their friends often ask for unpaid sexual services—favours—that if you refuse mean you'll get slow shifts or you'll get passed up when it's busy. These are only a couple of glimpses into the daily events of the lives of commercially exploited persons, many of whom are bought and sold in municipally licensed establishments for sex in Ontario.

I lost 10 years of my life to the licensed sex trade, both in GTA strip clubs and bawdy houses. I have no memory of a time in my life when sexual violence did not exist for me. By the time I was seven years old I had amassed nine abusers, one rapist and a generational pedophile convicted—my maternal grandfather. Abuse became normalized in my mind and it became an ordinary part of my life. The lens that I used to make sense of life was based on the only thing that I knew, and those were my experiences as a child. Over the course of my childhood, sexual violence, verbal abuse, neglect, physical and emotional abuse, social marginalization and finally abandonment left me unable to live in a state that many would consider normal. I was just barely surviving.

I entered the sex trade a few months after turning 17, and what I had experienced as a child had really groomed and prepared me for a life of exploitation and for exploiting others. My prostituted reality was based on my past experience. My coping mechanisms and my rationale for interpreting life were all based on what I thought was normal. Sexual violence devastated my home. It left my future in peril. It rendered me hopeless. I no longer had dreams for a future or a hope for better things. It made harassment invisible because sexual violence was normal.

A term coined by Johan Galtung in the 1960s, "structural violence," is one way of describing social arrangements that put individuals and populations in harm's way. Structural violence is embedded in the economic, political, legal, religious and cultural organization of our social world. It causes injury to people, and it stops them from reaching their full potential. Structural violence as it relates to sexual violence and harassment includes physical and psychological harm that are direct results of exploitive and unjust social, political and economic systems. Structural violence withholds from women basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter for herself and for her children, equal access to education, health care and the fundamental right to possess and protect her own body and not be abused.

The sex trade, in and of itself, is violence against women and girls, and it is a human rights violation. It creates an underclass of women that gives them a degraded status everywhere. Most simply put, it is the

power to purchase another human being for 100% of the buyer's sexual preference and 0% of the seller's preferences, feelings and/or emotions. I've never had someone buy me and then ask me what I would like to do.

Legitimizing the sale and purchase of sex through licensing sanctions violence against women, and it reinforces the inequality of women and girls. If we continue to license, we become a huge contributor to the perception that sexual violence and harassment are a normalized part of society, and it gives the impression that buying and selling women is just business, licensed like any other.

In what other business is the main duty of the job sexual violence? Legitimate employment does not include sexual harassment or discrimination. The option of hiring someone based solely on their breast size, hair colour or weight—we have laws that protect us from that because it is unhealthy and because it does not align with societal views.

In what other industry is one forced to be subjected to numerous diseases like gonorrhea, syphilis, HIV/AIDS or herpes? Who in a legitimate employment system has to fear being arrested or incarcerated? Violence against women and inequality are amplified when licensed. Each and every prostituted person, every day, would be able to make a claim under WSIB had they had been in any other industry.

Licensing may be well intentioned, supposedly to minimize harm, or it may be a very lucrative business venture for the municipalities in which it exists, but neither of these rationalizations offer protection, safety or a real way to combat sexual violence and harassment for its citizens.

Harm reduction—whether in high-end escort, street, indoor or condo settings—only suggests that the seller isn't being hurt very much. Harm minimization does not eliminate harm. We must also factor in the overwhelming evidence that shows that PTSD, dissociation and depression are very prevalent amongst this population. Licensing, in fact, is the reason that many victims are not even aware that what is happening to them is wrong because it is socially sanctioned.

Did you know that women have to purchase an individual licence to engage in the trade within these facilities? By-law enforcement typically issues fines to any who hold the licence and contravene its regulation. But that leaves a procurer, pimp or trafficker who is supplying and exploiting that person with no obligations or consequences within this licensing system.

In my 10 years of experience in the sex trade, I have never not worked for organized crime or gangs. These networks traffic women and girls both domestically and internationally into bawdy houses across Canada. We have seen evidence of this most recently when the RCMP intervened against two major cells of a network and arrested six people in the greater Montreal and Toronto areas. The accused are allegedly part of an Asia-based organized crime ring that operated bawdy houses in Montreal, Toronto and many other major cities across Canada.

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Sexual violence and harassment keep prostituted women and girls acutely vulnerable to continued abuse and exploitation. There is so much proof that sexual violence and harassment exists within licensed venues, and yet there is still a conscious decision made by officials to ignore the disturbing truth about this reality. We must call municipal officials to account to accept their own role as systemic contributors that perpetuate sexual violence and harassment.

I submit to you, as a 10-year survivor of the municipally licensed sex trade, that you must consider and include the role and structure of municipally licensed sexual services within your scope of inquiry if you are to reach your goal of reducing, diminishing or ending sexual violence and harassment in Ontario.

The truth is that while there are a small number of women who say that they choose to be in prostitution, studies and my own experience show that the majority of women in prostitution have been pushed into it through poverty, gender inequality and a lack of alternatives. Municipal licensing normalizes prostitution. It renders it invisible and allows us as citizens to believe that we do not have a problem. The city makes lots of money, the parlour operators get rich, buyers get any sexual performance they want and society does not have to deal with the reality of sex for money on their streets. It sounds bleak.

There are ways to deconstruct the system that currently upholds the framework of sexual violence and harassment: Choose to no longer municipally license any aspect of the sex trade that relates to and permits the sale of sex in Ontario. Do not open up any more licensed categories, because there is no way to control them. Create and implement campaigns for all levels of society that inform and teach about gender equality and offer alternative ways of talking about sexual violence and harassment that focus on the demand for paid sex.

This is not a women's issue. We must reframe our conversations because it is the male demand for access to women's bodies that is very much a part of the framework of sexual violence that allows and permits sexual violence to flourish. If we do not address the demand that creates the violence, sexually exploited persons will remain abused and invisible. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Ms. Diamond. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus. MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Powerful. You were just incredible. I hardly know where to start. You have hit a topic that we've been approaching a bit today, but your recommendations are incredibly excellent and, I think, pretty revealing on the municipal side of what really goes on.

I know that on the Internet there are daily online sex ads. Do you have any idea how many girls in those ads are actually being trafficked?

Ms. Cassandra Diamond: Currently, today, unless the woman is actually advertising herself, it's trafficking. It's no longer legal for anybody else to advertise herself but her.

Trafficking versus prostitution: That's kind of a bit of a funny conversation to me because of the consent piece. Women are forced into prostitution because of a lack of alternatives and options, much like trafficked women. They have a lack of alternatives and options as well.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you for providing the care that you do and being a survivor yourself, and being able to be strong enough to provide alternatives to those who can't get out. I can't thank you enough for that.

I know we have limited time and I'm being cut off, but I can't thank you enough for coming forward today.

Ms. Cassandra Diamond: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I just want to say thank you very much. Your story was very compelling. We had heard from someone earlier about the same topic, the sex trade, and they identified that the first key way of helping was stable housing. This topic seems to be a very unique way of delivering services. What would be the next specialized service that's unique to this area so that we can help survivors?

Ms. Cassandra Diamond: Excellent question. When I'm working with women, I care about the recidivism rate. I don't want them going back. So there are two things that we have to concern ourselves with. Katarina MacLeod was right: Housing is primary. Then it's like a tie for second: counselling and job opportunities. If you cannot make enough money to provide for yourself or your family, again, the vacuum just sucks you right back up and you're stuck. Instead of working in the industry full-time, maybe somebody will be a weekend warrior and ply their trade on the weekends, just to make enough.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Right.

Ms. Cassandra Diamond: I see a lot of that, where people try to exit because they truly don't want to be there, but because there aren't other social support systems or because of a lack of education—90% of the women that I had worked with have disclosed childhood sexual abuse. These are women who really haven't been able to receive the counselling that they needed as a child.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you today is from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much. I do echo the comments of my colleagues across the table about how valuable your testimony and your suggestions are today.

It's interesting about structural violence being a male issue; I would have to agree, having listened to so many stories. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions on how we stop that pervasive male-against-female sexual violence in our society?

Ms. Cassandra Diamond: Very good. I recognize that, in society now, men are really having a rough go. Everything is a very hyper-sexualized content. Everything is kind of drawing on their basic instinct. It's just a sexualized environment that they're living in.

But that plus women being constantly objectified—women are constantly wearing less and less in music videos and media. There is so much more pornography that's available. In the past, what used to be in print is not the same as what you're seeing on the Internet.

I think that we need to create a respectful and healthy dialogue in which men are not shamed, but they're respected, and they have an opportunity to really talk about what it feels like for them to be a man. We've got terms like "metrosexual." "Metrosexual" is a term used for men in part because they're not big, burly and manly enough. So how are they supposed to navigate through that?

We need a deeper conversation where they're included, and they have—that's a tough one. That's all I've got. That's really a tough one.

But we need them involved, we need them engaged. We need them to be more respectful towards women.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Ms. Diamond, thank you very much. We're grateful that you came here today and shared your insights with us. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now, as we are going to continue with our final presenter for today.

MS. SANDY WELSH

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): I would ask that Sandy Welsh come forward. Please make yourself comfortable. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by some questions for you. Begin any time.

Ms. Sandy Welsh: Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to speak to you today concerning the Premier's Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment.

Without a doubt, there has been a lot of interest this year in sexual harassment and violence. We've had Jian Ghomeshi. We've had the Dalhousie dentistry gentlemen Facebook group. We have had the federal Parliament issues. Most recently, we have had the report that was released by the military on sexual harassment and how they're going to move forward on that issue.

With my time today, I want to address the issue of sexual harassment at work by discussing three issues that I believe are central to our ability to prevent harassment and support those going through it. These three issues are ones I've been asked about throughout my career by lawyers, politicians, human resource managers and women trying to make sense of their experience. The fact that I continue to be asked these does not mean we've made little progress. Rather, to me, it means our work is not done yet, and we need to continue working on these issues long after the media spotlight is gone.

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My contribution today is based on my role as a professor of sociology at the University of Toronto and my 20-plus-year record of academic research focused on the study of sexual and workplace harassment. This work ranges from the analysis of survey data, analysis of

confidential complaints to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, and the analysis of an interview- and focus-group-based study of women's experience with workplace harassment and violence, especially in terms of their ability to seek legal recourse or remedy for their complaint.

I've also provided oral or written evidence in numerous Ontario and Canadian Human Rights Commission tribunals, to the 2013 federal Parliament's Standing Committee on the Status of Women's report on sexual harassment, and—I think it's very relevant for today—in the 1997 coroner's inquest into the deaths of Theresa Vince and Russell Davis, where Theresa Vince was sexually harassed and then murdered by her boss, Mr. Davis, in Chatham, Ontario.

My opinions are based on my research, my experience talking with women who have experienced harassment, and my understanding of the larger research literature in this area.

So what are these three issues? They are: What is sexual harassment and where is it likely to occur? Why do women not report? And how can we best prevent harassment and violence? I'll follow these with some specific recommendations related to Bill 168, the Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, and the Premier's action plan.

First, what is sexual harassment and where is it most likely to occur? Most people understand workplace harassment as the list of behaviours, from sexual comments to touching to assault, that's found in almost every single workplace harassment policy. While outlining this list is important, as a sociologist, I believe we need more than lists of behaviours to understand what harassment is.

First, the focus on a list of discrete individualized behaviours ignores how harassment is experienced by women. In my research, in the cases I've been involved with, women will mention how the range of behaviours they've experienced, from putting up with jokes to being touched, is not a series of discrete events, but one prolonged, cumulative experience of harassment. I think you may have heard earlier today from some survivors speaking about harassment experience that captured just what I'm talking about here in terms of how these are experienced as one long, cumulative event. I'm going to return to this issue when I discuss Bill 168.

For me, it's what underlies this list of behaviours, what they all have in common, that provides the roadmap for how we may improve our policies and procedures around harassment. Sexual and other forms of workplace harassment are, first and foremost, an organizational issue, not an interpersonal problem. It's not just about people behaving badly or needing their attitudes adjusted. Whether the behaviours are sexualized, gender-based or more generalized forms of abuse, at their core, these behaviours are meant to be hostile and demeaning. As a range of studies suggest, sexual harassment behaviours often signal an individual or a group is not welcome or is a competitive threat.

Because harassment is an organizational problem, it helps us understand why it is more likely to occur in

certain contexts, such as where job insecurity or competition for jobs exists. This includes workers in temporary positions, workers on probation, or those in any kind of trial period for a position. Sexual harassment is also more likely where there are gender, racialized or other workplace power differences. This is why women in male-dominated workplaces have a higher risk of harassment.

Here it is also important to note that other types of harassment may co-occur with sexual harassment. For example, in my analysis of complaints to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, approximately 10% of the women complainants were also physically abused, such as being spat upon, hit or kicked.

What can we conclude from this? Any policy or training recommendation we may contemplate needs to incorporate the organizational components of sexual harassment and how sexual harassment intersects with other forms of inequality and harassment experienced by women.

Second, I am often asked—actually, the most common question is “Why didn’t she just report it?” when testifying in sexual harassment tribunals. Study after study documents that only a small number of women experiencing harassment file formal complaints. Why? Because they fear losing their jobs, retaliation, not being believed; they don’t have family or coworkers to support them, or they simply don’t have the right information about what all their options are. In addition, women from certain communities may face unique barriers to reporting; for example, women with disabilities or for whom English is not their first language.

In our study of women in Ontario, women’s willingness to report was also affected by their citizenship or newcomer status. For example, a recent immigrant to Canada did not report because she did not think her experience was serious enough. She did not define her experience as harassment. It was not serious enough to be considered a complaint in the Canadian context.

Most women do not report until one of two things happens: The harassment escalates in severity, where they feel like they can’t handle it anymore, or they lose their job or some other severe employment-related outcome happens.

Just because someone does not make a formal complaint, it is important to remember that this person may have signaled that there is a problem in numerous ways. Again, the research literature is clear: Women may avoid the harasser by taking days off work or use other strategies to avoid contact.

During the inquest into the death of Theresa Vince, I testified to the multiple ways she signaled there was a problem. This long-time employee in her late fifties decided to take early retirement to get away from her boss. She moved her desk to another part of the office and would have her colleagues intervene on her behalf when her boss phoned her. Her behavioural reactions were well known by managers and co-workers.

In the recently released report concerning the CBC and Jian Ghomeshi, managers did not follow up

adequately when information about his behaviour came to them through informal mechanisms. Employers and managers have a responsibility to pay attention to these informal ways that women and, I would say, men say there is a problem.

While reporting is an important part of reducing harassment, it must be emphasized that there is a cost to reporting in terms of time, money and health. Reporting is not often straightforward. Women in our Ontario study discussed what I call the legal runaround. Depending on the workplace, whether there was a union and whether it was federally or provincially regulated, women may have been told to file a grievance through the union, through a workplace complaint procedure or to a human rights commission, and they found themselves bouncing around trying to find the best place to start. Clearly, more attention to women’s access to legal recourse is needed.

Finally, how may we best prevent harassment and violence? There are three options discussed in the research literature that I will mention here:

(1) A supportive and co-operative workplace culture where organizational leadership visibly supports anti-harassment cultures and policies, where gender, racialized and other inequalities across work groups are reduced, and where interpersonal competition and job insecurity are reduced, or at least the effects of these inequities are recognized by management, may help reduce workplace harassment.

This has been something I’ve been saying for years. If you read some of the recommendations and conclusions in the Ghomeshi report, Janice Rubin is saying the same thing: that this is what we need to do as one of our first steps in preventing harassment.

(2) Proactive policies and procedures encourage reporting and hence may help reduce harassment. That’s the second thing we need to think about. It is important to note that the reporting and filing of complaints is not necessarily a sign of a problematic workplace. I often hear managers say, “One complaint is too many.” At the same time, my experience is that one complaint means someone believes she can complain and that her complaint will be taken seriously. So complaints are not the best measure of whether a workplace has a harassment problem or a university has a sexual assault problem. Rather, complaints may mean an organization has a culture and policies and procedures that are doing what we want them to do: enabling workers to come forward when something problematic happens.

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(3) Training that encourages bystander interventions may make a difference. Programs where workers are trained not to ignore the harassment and violence, including developing strategies to push back earlier, may help. In practice, these range from interventions on the spot, such as calling out colleagues engaged in inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour, to confidential complaint hotlines, especially for more serious offences. I am pleased that some of these are mentioned in the action plan.

What does this mean for Bill 168 and the Sexual Violence Action Plan? Based on my academic and profes-

sional experience and some discussions with colleagues in preparation for my being here today, I'd like to point to some areas of concern that I see in both Bill 168 and in the Sexual Violence Action Plan when it comes to the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Since its inception, Bill 168 has separated harassment from violence. Employers must do a risk assessment for violence but not for harassment. This separation, or dichotomy, of harassment and violence ignores what many scholars and many women living through harassment recognize is a continuum of violence and harassment. As I mentioned earlier, harassment is part of a continuum. By separating violence out, the potential for escalation can be ignored in workplaces. While every instance of verbal harassment does not necessarily lead to violence, it can. Let's not forget about Theresa Vince and her family. Harassment can be deadly.

By separating out harassment and violence, it leads to different solutions for these. As we see in Bill 168, it does not provide the same protection for harassment in that employees cannot refuse unsafe work in the same way they can when violence, or the threat of violence, is occurring.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Welsh, you have one minute left.

Ms. Sandy Welsh: Sure.

We need to ensure that our definitions of unsafe work reflect this. We also need to emphasize that formal reporting isn't the only way forward, that informal matters.

I would like to commend what I see as the unapologetic and intentional gendered focus of the action plan. This is a welcomed change. It does not at all ignore or discount the violence that's experienced by men at work. Rather, it shows what my research says, that we need leadership at the top, like the Premier is doing and like all of you here are doing, to take this issue seriously and recognize the increased risk that girls and women face when they're in the workplace and when it comes to sexual harassment. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thanks for your presentation and for playing a large role in the narrative of what we're trying to do here through your academic endeavours and also just through your testimony here today.

Ms. Sandy Welsh: Thank you.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I guess I'd just like to give you some more time to give us some final thoughts. I know you skipped over particularly your last bullet point there.

Ms. Sandy Welsh: They really were to emphasize what it is that works, and it's about leadership in organizations. It's about policies that don't just sit in a drawer, that are brought out, dusted off and reviewed. I think it is also about giving the people within workplaces the right guidance and the right kind of training—not training that's off the shelf, not training where somebody has hung their shingle and says, "I'm going to do harassment

training now and make a bunch of money," but training that is really done thoughtfully, that takes into account the different communities that women are coming from.

I think that was a theme that I saw in the action plan that was very much appreciated: an understanding that while there are certain ways forward around policies and the work we do on the culture that can translate over other workplaces, the devil really is in the details. How a policy looks and how it works within an organization, we need to pay careful attention to this.

One of the good outcomes of Bill 168 is that pretty much everywhere in Ontario with over five employees has a policy now. Some of them look kind of cookie-cutter. Are those the right kind of policies for every kind of workplace? I don't know. Organizations don't let people like me into their organization to study what's going on. This is where organizations themselves, the really strong organizations that are trying hard to combat this and take it seriously, are the ones—and it doesn't matter what their size is. Managers are walking around and making sure. They're keeping an eye on things. Larger organizations are doing climate surveys of their workplace.

It's not just asking, "Have you experienced harassment?" but asking about different kinds of behaviours that might relate to that. Are people taking a lot of days off? Are people taking up a lot of sick leave? Maybe those are indicative of people who are really sick, but sometimes those are indicative of a sick workplace. So helping employers understand what the signs are and then not just doing it once when everybody is watching but making it part of their regular processes, I think, is very important.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our Liberal caucus.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi, Ms. Welsh. Thanks so much for being here. This is just brilliant, and your work is really enormously helpful.

When I knew you were coming today, I wanted to ask you—and you've covered it in your presentation: In a utopian universe, what does a harassment-free workplace look like? And while we know no such thing exists, you've certainly laid out in a really comprehensive way, I think, how we can get there and our pathway forward on that, which is brilliant.

Two quick things: Our Minister of Labour, Kevin Flynn, as part of the overall action plan, is going to be seized with workplace harassment, and so we'll ensure that he gets a copy of your presentation.

Also, you mentioned a little bit under your recommendations—I think these are recommendations you were talking about—the lack of information about options for reporting. We've heard that in other places, and I certainly think, anecdotally, that that's the case. A lot of people, particularly young people, don't know exactly what their options are. Any thoughts on how we can really further that along and change that dynamic?

Ms. Sandy Welsh: I will answer that, but I just want to make a comment on your point about a utopian work-

place where harassment doesn't exist. When I was younger, 20 years ago, I was idealistic, and I thought we could create truly harassment-free workplaces. I'm older; I don't know if I'm wiser. I've thought about this a lot, and I think the reality is that in every workplace something can happen. While we still need to aim for that harassment-free workplace, we need to make sure that when something does happen, we have the right things in place. So I guess I'm maybe more pragmatic; it happens with age and children.

In terms of options for reporting, I think you may have received a copy of a report that I did with a number of colleagues on harassment and violence. When you talk to women and to the non-profit social support community out there, there isn't an organization that says it's a sexual harassment centre. So I think some of it is in the places—universities, colleges, sexual assault centres—where people go to get information, that they have that information.

I think there is a role to play for our regulated health care professions. I was presenting at an Ontario training session for a number of lawyers, and I was pleased that a number of the people from those bodies were there because they were trying to get better information about how they handle complaints with their own professions. But I think it's also an opportunity for them to be the first ears and eyes when these issues come forward.

I think with young people, we have some particular challenges. This is partly as a researcher and as a mother of a 15-year-old and a nine-year-old girl. Whether they even know how to define it was something that came up in our research. People who are new to Ontario and Canada, young people who are new to the workplace, too, don't necessarily understand that a comment, a joke, a touch or an invitation to go out for a drink is something that they can say no to.

Again, I think there are things that we can do that enable people to talk about it. There is the behaviours and attitudes part. But then we need to ensure that the organization—we can't just stop there. The organization has to have the kind of training and information that they're providing to new workers, especially young workers and especially temporary workers, when they start a job as to what their rights are and how we are defining these things.

1700

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final questions for you are from our PC caucus.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you for your presentation. I'm particularly interested in your point 1, "Since its inception..." I actually sat on that committee, and we had very optimistic views of how we were going to improve the situation. I'm curious as to how you see, in a very practical way, the separation of harassment from violence. You say that employers do not do a risk assessment for violence, and you're absolutely right: There was a huge boom in the consultancy industry when every business over five had to have a workplace harassment policy in place. But tell me how this translates into that business with six employees.

Ms. Sandy Welsh: Well, I think that's a good question, because I will admit that the challenge we have is not the big companies or the big universities and colleges; it is that small, family-owned business. Those are a lot of the cases, I would say, in the last few years—When I'm called to testify, it's an owner-operated kind of small business. So how do we get that across?

I know that for many years, the Canadian Human Rights Commission used to have various kinds of information on their website that was there and available—the extent to which our Ontario Human Rights Commission is providing that kind of information, too. To me, the first step would be that someone is able to say, "This is an unsafe workplace and I don't feel safe." I'm first and foremost concerned about that separation we see between harassment and violence, that that is part of a policy and part of an understanding.

I think there's also a lot of support, but how do we get the support to those owner-operators, whether they want it or not? Figuring out ways that people can join together in terms of their resources, to be part of groups of businesses that may be in a local area where they've come together and either a lawyer or someone is able to help them—these, I think, are the really hard and tough questions. There may be a role for the Ontario legal association as to working with them and working with the Ontario Human Rights Commission about how we can come together.

I should say that I think Bill 168 was a great step forward. I was part of some of those conversations, but just like an organization's policy, I really welcome this as an opportunity to take it out, dust it off, kick its tires and see if it's still working in the way that we want it to work. So thank you for that question.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for coming and informing this committee today of your important work. Thank you to everyone who was here today at our hearings.

Committee members, I have some housekeeping duties to take care of with you, if I may, beginning with information I want to pass on to you. I've asked the Clerk to inform Hansard that we ought to be a priority with our information and with our interim report. We're competing with a number of other committees. We want to make certain that we get our information, so we have asked Hansard to make us a priority, so we'll get our information when we need it.

Secondly, you may have noticed that you all received one of these. This is your report handed out to you. I believe that we had some committee members who were asking for research and background, and here it is.

Thirdly, next Monday is when we travel. We're going to be departing from the Legislature at 4 p.m. sharp. So please be ready to go, unless you've made prior arrangements with our Clerk.

Now, you may have noticed that the days that we're in Kitchener and Ottawa, those days are very full; we're oversubscribed. So I have a suggestion, and that is, we begin our hearings on those days at 8 a.m. That's going to allow us to get more people in at the start of the day

versus our staying very late in the day. For instance, the day that we're in Ottawa, if we add all the additional people, we may end up going quite late that day. So in the interest of starting at 8 a.m. and being done at 5:40 p.m. in Ottawa versus an hour later, are you okay with that? Your thoughts on that? Very good. Okay.

Does anyone have any questions about next week? All right. Thank you very much, committee members, and to our guests who are here today.

We will see you on Wednesday at 9 a.m. This committee stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1706.

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Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 13 mai 2015

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel



Chair: Daiene Vernile
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE ET DU HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Wednesday 13 May 2015

Mercredi 13 mai 2015

The committee met at 0902 in committee room 1.

STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good morning, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order.

Committee members, we have some information we need to share with you concerning a presenter who was scheduled for this afternoon, and we are just going to go in camera now to discuss that with you.

The committee continued in closed session from 0903 to 0919.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now continue.

I want to welcome our presenters this morning and the guests who are here with us in our committee room. I want to share with you the mandate of this committee. We're here to listen to your experiences as survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You're going to inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward and reporting abuses. However, I do want to stress that we do not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRES OF ONTARIO

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I welcome you, and I'll let you know that you will have 15 minutes to make your presentation, followed by questions from our committee. Please begin by stating your names.

Ms. Janet Handy: Good morning, Madam Chair and committee members. On behalf of the provincial network of child and youth advocacy centres, I want to thank you for the opportunity to present to the committee today. My name is Janet Handy. I'm the executive director of the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara. I have 30 years of experience working with victims and survivors of child sexual and physical abuse from all walks of life. The network represents 10 centres in

Ontario. Four are open; six others are in various stages of development.

The child and youth advocacy centres support the provincial It's Never Okay action plan to stop sexual violence and harassment. The action plan promises to challenge myths, improve supports for survivors and educate and inform a new generation of boys and girls. CYACs offer a leading response practice to address sexual violence at its roots. We need to start in the present with children suffering child abuse, including sexual violence, in order to change their future.

The problem: Children and youth are five times more likely than adults to become victims of sexual offences. Almost 60% of all victims of police-reported sexual assault are children under the age of 18. The rate of sexual assaults against children and youth is 1.5 times higher than that of 18- to 24-year-olds. Forty-seven per cent of violent crimes against girls under the age of 12 are sexual in nature. Female youth aged 12 to 17 are eight times more likely than male youth to be victims of sexual assault.

Our response to the problem: Child and youth advocacy centres are a seamless, coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing the needs of child and youth victims/witnesses of violence, abuse and crime. We seek to minimize, including system-induced trauma, by providing a child-friendly, one-stop service hub for child victims/witnesses and their families.

We collaborate on services. A highly skilled multi-disciplinary team of professionals responds to cases involving child and youth victims and witnesses. They include police, child protection services, crown attorneys, medical people, mental health, victim support and advocacy services and others.

How do we fit into the action plan? We address root causes, we champion collective efforts, we reduce health risks and we take action from the beginning.

We would respectfully suggest that in order for systemic, generational change to occur, it's not just important that young people learn respectful behaviours from the beginning, but that we learn to respect children from the beginning.

Why should we inform your policy development?

(1) We improve the experience of children, youth and families navigating the criminal justice system.

(2) We blend therapeutic responses with criminal prosecution.

(3) We provide an outcomes-oriented system that focuses on early intervention, reducing repetitive sexual violence in the future.

(4) We provide specialized trauma-informed services.

(5) We train ongoing professional development for multidisciplinary team members.

(6) We provide public education that is prevention-focused.

(7) We provide a supportive system response to children and youth and their families that they are entitled to receive from our systems.

(8) We utilize a best practice approach to support a compassionate and sensitive response from all service sectors.

(9) We utilize a multidisciplinary team approach to enhance the seamlessness of services, building stronger ties between organizations and service providers.

(10) We utilize public assets efficiently.

Child and Youth Advocacy Centres of Ontario meet with people from all walks of life. We urge you to make us part of the solution to the provincial It's Never Okay action plan to stop sexual violence at its roots.

Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Will your other presenters be speaking or are you prepared for your questions now?

Ms. Janet Handy: They will be answering questions with me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. Thank you very much. We begin our questioning with our PC caucus, with MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thanks for your presentation. I apologize; I am not familiar with child and youth advocacy centres, even though I see that you have the Safe Centre of Peel. So I have to do my homework. How are you funded?

Ms. Janet Handy: Most of us are funded in a multitude of ways. We have government funding that is time-limited and project-specific at most levels of government, including municipal. We all, I believe, fundraise like crazy. Some of us have partner support, so some of our multidisciplinary team partners also will contribute to the centre.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Okay. Do I have time?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You absolutely do.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Excellent. Okay. I see with the collaboration of services you mention a number of agencies that would obviously be operating in all of your communities where you serve. So in terms of the multidisciplinary team, tell me what a typical CYAC would look like?

Ms. Susanne McCarroll: Child advocacy centres or child and youth advocacy centres are developed to include primary multidisciplinary team members. So in every CYAC you would have child protection workers. You would have police. You would have counselling. You would have mental health advocacy and medical.

Not every CYAC will have them co-located on-site, but they will have them as part of that team that supports the child and the family when they come in.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: And are they there as almost permanent secondments, or as you need a mental health worker, you call on the appropriate agency? How does that work?

Ms. Susanne McCarroll: In some of the centres they're permanent; they're on-site and are utilized. In others, we have partnerships with a particular mental health organization that will see those clients who come through the centre.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: One more?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes. You actually have time.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): A quick one.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: So you are obviously not all across Ontario. The locations that you are in currently, was that a community-driven initiative or did your organization choose that this particular area needed help faster, sooner?

Ms. Janet Handy: For the most, part we are community-driven. Niagara's certainly the oldest. We've been in operation six years. It was begun by two partners, police and child welfare, with mental health services as part of our child welfare system.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for the presentation. The slides refer to—this is a best practice approach. So I'm wondering if in other jurisdictions where this kind of multidisciplinary team approach has been utilized, has there been an evaluation done on the impact of this kind of organization on reducing sexual violence and harassment?

Ms. LaRee Walters-Boadway: This movement is relatively new in Canada. The Department of Justice Canada, over the last 10 years, has been providing funding across the different provinces to develop CYACs. Over the last two years, they have been spearheading a research project across four or five sites across Canada to develop Canadian outcome research, and all of the CYACs that are open in Ontario, because a number of them are still in development, are collecting their own outcome data.

We also have a tremendous amount of research coming out of the United States as this movement of CYACs has been in existence for 30 years. So we've been drawing upon that, as well as the National Children's Alliance in the United States, which is the accrediting body that provides that practice standards. But we are in the process of developing Canadian practice standards, and the Ontario network has spearheaded that and taken the lead in Canada to develop those practice standards. We started in Ontario and recently have met in Calgary at the Sheldon Kennedy Child Advocacy Centre

with representatives across Canada to develop Canadian standards.

We still need some support in developing more information about Ontario and Canadian standards. We are working at doing that and embarking on the potential of a project to be collecting similar outcomes across sites so that we can demonstrate the collective impact across the province.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much. I'm very familiar with the Child Witness Centre in Waterloo region. Not only have I toured it, but I've worked with them through my work in the community for the crime prevention council. I wish we could drop your agency into every community in Ontario. It really is very valuable.

I'm interested in your thoughts on what are the root causes of sexual assault in children; and secondarily, how do we prevent that as a society?

Ms. Jennifer Jackson: I'll speak to the prevention piece. The root causes of sexual violence against children, or anyone, are very complicated and multifaceted. But the most important piece, in my mind, about prevention is actually educating the adults and the community. I think we do put a lot of energy into educating children, which is very important. They need to know what's okay and what's not okay and how to speak about it. But, quite simply, no child is a match for someone who intends to sexually offend against them, ever. So the most important thing that we need to do is create a conversation in our communities—and we're very passionate about doing that work—so that it's not the taboo subject, that when you do disclose, or when children disclose, that adults are prepared to hear that answer and recognize that it really is a problem that's prevalent in our communities.

0930

As organizations, I know that we have the capacity to go out and speak that message and make sure that conversation is being had. I think that that's where we'll have a great impact in our communities.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Can you address any details or any picture of a typical sexual assault predator? Paint a picture.

Ms. Jennifer Jackson: I could. The most important thing to learn about sexual offenders, actually, is that there's really no typical offender. That kind of thinking can create a dangerous perception in our minds so that we're not recognizing the one beside us, or the one who we work with.

We do know that close to 90% of all sexual assaults against children are familial, so it's somebody within their family, or someone who they know and trust, which creates great access for children. But, outside of that, we have quite a bit of—they are people who children would meet in an authority position, like sports leaders, church

leaders, teachers, and so that's where we're educating the community and those organizations.

There's a program delivered by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection called Commit to Kids. That's a very powerful program that we can use to educate people about grooming behaviour. Sometimes grooming behaviour takes up to two years by an offender, and they're very purposeful in their intent. Even myself, who is well versed in grooming behaviour, I have the potential to be groomed. We need to educate people around us. I need to have someone beside me that might say, "Hey, I'm noticing that that behaviour looks out of line."

There's a lot to do, and it's just about sharing that message. I think it's the most powerful thing. Most of the big cases that we see—if people had that information about grooming behaviour, someone would have spoken up or someone would have answered more quickly.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very for coming and informing this committee today. I invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now.

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF INTERVAL AND TRANSITION HOUSES

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenters to come forward: The Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses. Please have a seat and make yourselves comfortable. You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Begin by stating your names, and start any time.

Ms. Anne Armstrong: Thank you very much, and thank you to the committee for allowing us to have the opportunity to be here today and to share our thoughts around the problem of sexual violence and harassment and how they intertwine with women abuse.

I am Anne Armstrong. I am currently the co-chair of the Ontario Executive Directors Group, or OEDG. That's an ad hoc advisory group consisting of approximately one third of Ontario's MCSS-funded VAW—violence against women—shelters. I am also on the board of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, or OAITH. As well, I'm the executive director of Gillian's Place, a violence against women shelter and counselling services agency based in St. Catharines.

Ms. Charlene Catchpole: Good morning, everyone. Thank you very much. My name is Charlene Catchpole. I also co-lead the Ontario Executive Directors Group, and I chair OAITH currently. I am also the executive director of the North York Women's Shelter here in the city.

Ms. Anne Armstrong: Through these roles, we have developed a unique perspective on the problem of sexual violence and harassment, both as local service providers and as provincial advocates. Sadly, from this experience, it's clear that the problem remains very significant, and far too many people continue to be assaulted and victimized on a daily basis.

As you likely have already heard from numerous other presenters, one in three women will be a victim of sexual

violence at one point in their lives, according to the 2006 Statistics Canada report. One in three will also be a victim of domestic violence from an intimate partner.

Within the shelter system it's clear that we cannot separate these two types of violence towards women, as the vast majority that we serve experience sexual assault within the context of an abusive relationship. Sexual coercion is very common within a power-and-control dynamic.

When we look at young women who are our future, we see that the problem remains very prevalent. Evidence from the American Association of University Women indicates that 20% to 25% of college-aged women will be the victim of sexual assault. As a mother of daughters, and granddaughters, I find this totally unacceptable.

What's even more troubling is that less than one in 10 sexual assaults are reported to the police. These survivors hide their pain, hide their attacks, and they suffer significantly; 80% will face some sort of psychological or physical trauma that will haunt them for the rest of their lives. Research shows that survivors may experience concerns for their safety, the fear, the shame, the anxiety, anger, depression and suicidal behaviours. There can also be physical consequences such as broken bones, reproductive health effects, sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

This trauma is accentuated in most cases through close and ongoing proximity with the abuser, especially in intimate relationships. More than 80% of rapes that occur on college and university campuses are committed by someone known to them, with one half of these incidents occurring on dates. Imagine for a moment the pressure to keep silent if it was your daughter, away from home and family, at school for the first time, who has been sexually assaulted and has to face the person every day on campus. Imagine the fear and the stress as she faces each and every day having to relive the assault that was perpetrated on her.

At Gillian's Place we have a young woman on our board of directors who lobbied and fought to start the Brock Student Sexual Violence Support Centre where she now works. I just received an email this week saying that they need \$10,000 by May 21 in order to continue their work over the spring and summer sessions. This centre receives between five and 15 new texts every week from students reaching out for help after an assault. These students need our help.

There are so many reasons why we continue to see women, particularly young women, not reporting sexual violence to authorities. It's the fear, the shame, concerns about confidentiality, a distrust of the judicial system, or simply that they may not be aware of the supports available, especially for culturally competent services.

When they do reach out we need to make sure that there is a service out there to help them. We have in Ontario today a number of service providers, such as rape crisis counselling centres, violence against women shelters and victim service support providers, which exist for one purpose: to get the victims the help and support they need.

Despite that fact, most people know services exist in general but we have not done a good enough job yet as a society in ensuring that victims get connected to immediate support and know how to access it.

That being said, I'm very proud of the work that this government has done in this Legislature to begin seriously addressing the work on sexual violence. In the 2014-15 provincial budget, under the leadership of Premier Wynne, I know that there was an investment of \$15 million into supporting agencies, primarily violence against women shelters, that support women fleeing domestic violence and sexual violence.

The government further invested \$41 million in building awareness through a wonderful prevention campaign focused on TV ads and also the development of the provincial advisory table on violence against women.

However, that being said, I know that there's more that we can do to address this problem that affects us all. Towards that end I would like to make a couple of suggestions.

Ensure that there is a holistic approach to the problem of sexual violence and harassment, specifically one that includes a focus not only on prevention but also ensures that there is a robust network of service providers ready to help victims in the event of an assault. It's proven time and time again in our own organization: Every time we do a prevention campaign or an education campaign, more victims come forward for help.

0940

Work with the violence against women sector, specifically shelters, students' organizations, victim services providers, rape crisis counselling centres, and align providers to develop an outreach program targeted towards young women to ensure that they are aware of the services available to them and how to best access them.

I know recently we had a young man on our board from Brock University and he said that the young women at college and university campuses think that you can only come to a shelter if you're a mom with children. So we know that we've got lots of work to do in the public education area there.

Work with the sector to better integrate services, to build a more seamless level of care and enhance partnership within the violence against women space. As part of this work, I would suggest that Ontario fund the rollout of a locally based pilot program that can explore various approaches towards integration at a local level that could then be scaled up based on outcomes. I suggest this approach because, sadly, the problem of sexual violence in Ontario will not be eradicated within my lifetime. I would like to see a difference for my granddaughters.

We must, as the Premier has so boldly and successfully done, raise awareness around prevention and we must balance that with an equal focus around ensuring sufficient support services for those who come forward asking for help. This will ensure that there are fewer victims of sexual violence in this province and that those who are victimized don't suffer in silence but instead find the healing supports that they need to rebuild their lives.

I would like to thank the committee again for the time that you've given us to present today. We would be pleased to take any questions that you have.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for the presentation and for coming to present to the committee.

I wanted to ask about something that you said right at the beginning of your presentation. You said that the shelter system should not separate between sexual assault and domestic violence because they co-occur in many situations. Does the shelter system currently do that? Does it separate between sexual assault and domestic violence? And can you tell me a little bit more about your recommendation to fund a pilot project that would integrate services?

Ms. Charlene Catchpole: I think that the VAW shelter system in Ontario and the sexual assault centres could certainly be working closer. We do work together, but not as close as we could be. We feel, with our experience within a shelter, that the integration of services in creating those types of hubs offers the best type of service to women when they are coming in.

The majority of the women coming into a violence against women shelter—the perception in the community and for a lot of women is that that is about physical violence or emotional violence. What we find when those women come into the shelter is that they are survivors of ongoing sexual violence within their intimate partner relationships, making the connection deeper with sexual assault crisis counselling centres, which I think society in general views as being if there has been a one-time assault or a rape that has occurred. There needs to be more education and that would come with integrating those two pieces of work together. The sexual assault centres and VAW shelters, for example, have a lot of commonalities within the clients who we service. It's not just immediate crisis work that she needs when a woman comes into a shelter.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much, Charlene and Anne, for your presentation. I'm going to try to be as brief as possible but I want to go on to your pilot project. You barely touched it, and I wrote some notes, but I would like you to maybe tell the committee in terms of what exactly—I couldn't exactly capture the intent. So I'll let you speak a little bit about that, in terms of your recommendations.

Ms. Charlene Catchpole: The idea is that we would create a type of hub that would really bring those two services together in a much more integrated way, where women coming in; for example—because our experience primarily is working within a violence against women shelter setting. So having the experience of women coming in and then relaying their stories—again, we've known usually that that woman has come in our doors because of fleeing violence from a physical standpoint

within her intimate relationship. Once she's in our doors, her history of abuse has unfolded with our counsellors and the woman, we know, is now safe. She's physically safe. Her and/or dependants are living in a shelter. All of their immediate needs, including safety, are being met—but creating an integrated service where now we're using and utilizing the expertise of those services of a sexual assault centre.

So most of the staff within our shelters, for example, are well versed in counselling from a brief emergency integrated kind of approach where within a sexual assault centre they really have the knowledge, expertise and understanding of dealing with sexual violence and how that affects a woman's whole, if you will. So combining those two as a pilot project, to see how that would better service women.

Ms. Anne Armstrong: If I could add to that for just a moment.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Please.

Ms. Anne Armstrong: In speaking with my board member who runs the Brock sexual violence centre, I think it's really important—there are a lot of misconceptions in the student population, and it would be really important to weave those support centres into a hub that would help to better educate and support the young people who are there. I think they're really floundering.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our PC caucus.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you. Thanks for your presentation. I'm quite interested in how the role is different with a sexual assault support centre on a university or college campus. I get the part that young students don't necessarily know where the help is available and that they would qualify or that it would be appropriate for them to reach out for assistance. Tell me why we need a unique program on college campuses or university campuses as opposed to the excellent work that is happening within the community?

Ms. Anne Armstrong: In speaking with, again, my board member, my understanding of their service is that it's really a linkage to support—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: So it's more about referrals.

Ms. Anne Armstrong: Yes. They give them immediate crisis support. They might support them to go to the hospital sexual assault centre for the forensic application, but then, yes, they really are a referral—they're not doing the main counselling there.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Okay. That makes a lot of sense to me. Thank you. I needed that clarified.

Ms. Anne Armstrong: Yes. Sure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have more time if you'd like to ask some more questions.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Okay. The second question was, you mentioned an interest in a local pilot project dealing specifically with integration. Can you explain to the committee how you would envision that? What does that look like? You get an extra five minutes to do it, or three minutes.

Ms. Charlene Catchpole: Again, because I work and live in Toronto, I'll use Toronto as an example—certainly not to be Toronto-centric, but in the city of Toronto we have 13 funded violence against women shelters. We have one provincial assaulted women's helpline. That is a provincial helpline that is a crisis line. So in terms of creating a deeper connection and integration, in the city most of our referrals either come from an individual or come from a service called 211—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Can I interrupt? Because I know you've talked a bit about how you see it—and I don't want to be Toronto-centric, but Toronto is rather unique.

Ms. Charlene Catchpole: Yes.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Now in my community of over 100,000 people, we have one women's shelter, whose work is exemplary. So the integration component—I guess I'm trying to say it that may not be an issue for a lot of our communities. Is that a fair assessment? There isn't an over-supply of women's shelters in the province of Ontario. I've never heard anybody say, "We've got too many of those."

0950

Ms. Anne Armstrong: Oh, that's for sure. I actually like the one-stop-shop model, where it's under one roof and it doesn't matter whether you need sexual assault counselling or domestic violence counselling or whether you're just inquiring for information. I actually like that it's all under one roof and women just go there, and it doesn't matter. There are some women who would see a shelter and say, "Well, I'm not going there."

Ms. Sylvia Jones: So almost more of a sexual centre, dropping the "assault" word? So, sexual health or—

Ms. Anne Armstrong: That would be a big part of it. I know that at the Brock centre, they do a lot of early prevention education work, with condoms and lots of information in bars and things like that.

Yes, I do think under one roof, though, is very helpful, because women don't necessarily separate domestic violence and sexual violence—so the more you can get underneath what's really happening for them and help them understand that, "Actually, both are happening to you."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We're very grateful that you have come and informed our committee today. We invite you to join the audience, if you wish to.

THE MEN'S PROJECT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter to come forward: Rick Goodwin, with The Men's Project.

For the record, please start by stating your name. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions.

Mr. Rick Goodwin: Okay. Thanks for having me here, folks. My name is Rick Goodwin. I'm the clinical manager and co-founder of The Men's Project, a sexual

abuse treatment centre in Ottawa. The Men's Project is now under—

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sorry to interrupt.

Can I please ask that that conversation go outside or become a little quieter, so we may hear our next guest?

Continue.

Mr. Rick Goodwin: Thank you. The Men's Project is now working under the title 1in6 Canada.

I'm here to talk about the status of services for male victims of sexual violence here in Ontario. I'm here because I got a call from one of your researchers. Your researcher was looking for information on sexual violence, sexual assault and sexual abuse services for men in Ontario, and she was directed to call The Men's Project, as we would be the go-to place to find out about these services. After that discussion, I contacted the committee's Clerk and that brought me here today.

About The Men's Project: We're 18 years old. We started underneath the YMCA/YWCA, believing that there was a gap in community services in Ottawa for male victims of sexual violence. We're one of four free-standing agencies in Canada for male victims of sexual violence—one in four. We have a 16-year funding history with the Ministry of the Attorney General.

Before I continue, I believe it's important to share my credentials with you. I have a master's degree in social work. In 2007, we won the inaugural Attorney General's award of distinction for innovative victim services, essentially because we were serving men.

Our work at the Cornwall inquiry resulted in this book, this publication, building the research foundation for clinical services for male survivors.

Lastly, as my job and training for these services takes me here and there, we are now doing work for the American army. Two weeks ago, I was at a military base in Fort Robins in Georgia, providing training on services for male victims of sexual violence. They're looking at our agency as a model of this service.

The issues: One in six males in Ontario will be sexually abused by age 18. That's a conservative stat that refers to contact sexual abuse. If we looked at those numbers, we would be finding 1.2 million males in Ontario who will be or have been sexually abused.

In terms of sexual assault, the research is much softer. We don't really know. Between 3% to 12% is the best guess we can make on this. If we added those two populations up, we would be looking at about half the population of Toronto being males who have been sexually abused or sexually assaulted.

Before 1999, all sexual violence services under the Attorney General's office were women's services. This has been the historical position on this issue. At that time, Project Truth was building in Cornwall—the OPP investigation into the multi-victim, multi-perpetrator alleged sexual abuse ring. Hundreds of men were contacted by the OPP.

We were brought aboard by the Solicitor General's office, at the time, to provide a basic resource for these men, as well as do a needs assessment of male survivors

in the province, as well as an environmental scan of Cornwall services. The ministry brought us in because there weren't services for these boys and men who were victims, despite the existence of a sexual assault centre in Cornwall. The reason that agency was not serving these men is that the sexual assault centre, like many others, was focused on women survivors. That was when we first came on the scene. So 1999 was the first time male victims of sexual violence were served in a dedicated manner in Cornwall.

The Cornwall public inquiry came around and it investigated the failure of the justice system: 116 criminal charges being laid, yet only one conviction. As an agency, we had official standing with the inquiry. That resulted in some research, a number of conferences and that training manual I showed you. We recommended to Commissioner Glaude this one primary piece: Victim services around sexual violence should be delivered across Ontario without barrier of gender. We were very clear with Commissioner Glaude, and Commissioner Glaude made this his recommendation as well.

In 2009, the Attorney General's office responded to this recommendation and provided funding for male victims of sexual violence—the first time in North America on a jurisdictional basis. This funding was modest: \$2 million throughout the whole province. It was open to competition. Long story short: The funding was directed to a network of family service agencies. We were essentially not included in the funding matrix by the province. Now this was strange, because we were not only first out of the gates in providing these services, our services were in demand. We had wait-lists, and whatever else.

Around the time of that announcement by the AG, I got a call from Mr. Irwin Glasberg, who was the ADM of the ministry at the time, wanting to know what our secret was in getting men through the door, as they were not finding this at the counselling programs where these services were embedded. Of course, we talked about the difference between having an agency in the community with a shingle that says, "All men are welcome here," versus having one of many programs in a generic family agency.

Since that time, our funding has dropped. We were at close to \$300,000 a year. Last year, we were at \$100,000 a year. As of April 1 of this year, the province has defunded us entirely. We don't understand this. We've had project funding for 16 years. As the basis of project funding, as you all know, no reason has to be given for termination of this renewed project funding.

What will this mean? In Ottawa, it will mean that we will be closing the doors on over 100 men who are currently in treatment. Our expected date of that door closure, unless this funding decision can be reversed, is July 31. We provide services not only at the downtown Y, but we work with homeless men at the Mission, which is a shelter in downtown Ottawa. We work with the John Howard Society for men in conflict with the law who also happen to be sexual abuse victims. Between 40% to 80% of men in jail in the USA are sexual abuse victims.

There is a high correlation between victimization and offending behaviour on this issue.

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I think we know what we're doing. The ministry itself brought in an evaluation study in 2002, and it concluded that The Men's Project has "a very successful outcome."

In 2012, the University of Ottawa published a study in the *Journal of Men and Masculinity* that also determined clinical success of our program. We were told this is the first long-term study of male survivors in treatment in the world.

I think there are broader issues, though, provincially that I want to bring to your attention. We are the only male-identified centre on this issue in the entire province, but the recent funding decisions suggest that this will no longer be the case. There will not be any agencies of leadership on this issue.

We have done things like the first provincial series of training victim service providers throughout Ontario with the Ontario Office for Victims of Crime. We ran the first provincial conference on this topic as well. We've worked with many, many provincial bodies on this issue, including the Ontario Parole Board, that wanted training and they called us for that assistance.

As with the women's services sector, we believe that there needs to be leadership given on this issue or else men and boys will continue to be seen as invisible by the eyes of the public and by the eyes of funding structures for victims.

I want to show you one thing that I think we still have some tricks up our sleeve. I know you folks are looking at campus outreach. This is a blue guitar string. There are six strings on a guitar, one being blue; this represents a one-in-six figure of male sexual victimization. This is a campaign with stickers, information cards and a documentary. We can do campus-based outreach to young men as soon as we get the resources for this.

The average age of guys coming into treatment in Ottawa is 45; the average age of men sexually abused is between nine and 10. That's 35 years of needless suffering. We need to target younger men on this issue. By targeting younger men, we can get men healthier, better, keep families more intact, more men employed, less conflict with the law and fewer men stuffed in our addiction treatment centres. This is why trauma work with men will pay off.

It's often unfair to compare services, and I say this hesitantly: The Ontario government, through the Attorney General's office, funds 36 centres for women victims of sexual violence, and I'm glad they are there. This is not a criticism; I have two daughters myself. In Ottawa, we have three of these centres permanently funded.

The only men's centre in this province has now been defunded as of April 1. We're holding on and running operations until the end of July with our reserve fund, and then it's going to be closure for us. We've already given notice to our clients that this may happen. We've already given notice to our landlord that we can no longer pay the rent. There is a problem here.

I ask you to consider the boys of Ontario and the men that these boys become, and to please reinstate the funding for our services in Ottawa and allow us to play a continued leadership role in Ontario for the development of these services for these men and their families. Thank you for your attention.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first questions for you are from our Liberal caucus: MPP Albanese.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I wanted to thank you for your presentation and for appearing before the committee today, and for your plea. I know that the mandate of the committee is kind of different, but I think that just the sheer fact that you're here and that you're advocating for your agency will certainly be taken into consideration.

I did have some questions in regard to the men who you service. One thing that you said caught my attention. You said it's difficult to get men through the door to get those services. What can be done to help?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: We don't have a problem getting men through the door, in part because we're called The Men's Project. That is the name of our agency. We have been working with the Y for 18 years, so we have respectability in the community. We call ourselves The Men's Project because we don't want men to own the stigma of coming into a sexual assault centre or a sexual abuse centre. We don't want to have the men label themselves and feel shame for this—

Mrs. Laura Albanese: But what services are needed?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: The services we offer are short- and long-term therapy for male survivors of sexual abuse and sexual assault. That involves individual, but primarily group. We also run an anger management program because a lot of these guys have issues of aggression. With our partner agencies, particularly the John Howard Society, we work with men who are victims of sexual violence and have perpetrated sexually.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: But I meant on a more general basis, what do you see? Where are the gaps? Where are the services that are needed that are not being provided in general?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: After the Cornwall inquiry, services were rolled out in Ontario a mile wide and an inch thick, and those are not my words. There are services in many Ontario communities, again based in family agencies. You would have to talk to the folks at the Attorney General's office around demand for services in that regard. It's all short-term work and we know that this is a long-term treatment issue.

In our program in Ottawa, the long-term therapy component goes up to two years, which we think is a more thorough addressing of the complex trauma.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you.

Ms. Soo Wong: I just want to say thank you very much for being here. I recall hearing similar concerns raised at the hearings for the finance committee. I believe we were in Cornwall this year, so I remember hearing the concerns raised.

With regard to your history of servicing the Ottawa community, what is the access for the diverse commu-

nity? Ottawa has become very diverse. How is your agency able to draw out those various groups to come into your centre to get help?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: Good question. The issue of trauma and the issue of counselling in terms of overall services speaks more to some than to others. We know in some cultures, in some new Canadian populations even the word "counselling" is foreign in terms of a concept.

Our primary means has been outreach and training of partner agencies that serve newcomer populations. In particular, Catholic immigration services would be one that we have done this formal training with.

All men are welcome to our program, men of any walks of life, and I believe over the years I've been with the centre, we have gotten more diverse in our services. The last entry program that we've run—a man from Nicaragua; there was a man from Iran; we had two men from Germany, which is different than how it originally was for the agency at first. We've always been well served in terms of the gay men's community in Ottawa. There's no doubt about that.

Unfortunately, for us to become more diversified and more specialized in addressing particular populations would suggest that we need more resources rather than being defunded, as we have been over the years. So in many respects, we have less capacity to serve diversity in a community, as you know, that requires great diversity—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our PC caucus, MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for coming in from Ottawa today.

Oh, were you going?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: No.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I thought I was going. Anyway, there's competition to ask you questions.

So you are the only one in Ontario?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: A free-standing agency, yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: What is it?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: As a free-standing agency.

Ms. Laurie Scott: As a free-standing agency. So if I had a YMCA—or you mentioned the—what's the other agency? I just lost—

Interjection.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you; the John Howard Society. Do you come to train them? Are they a referral centre to you? Do they do the training? Can you answer that, and then maybe Ms. Jones gets a question. Sorry about that.

Mr. Rick Goodwin: Sure. We provide a training service, and that training service goes anywhere, but we have to receive payment for that. We've provided training all around the province.

The partnership with the Y and the partnership with John Howard is just in the Ottawa community.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

Mr. Rick Goodwin: So this is not provincially, though this would be a good step for the John Howard

Society of Ontario to consider. I know that this issue is on their map.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm obviously very concerned that the only agency that is serving men who have experienced sexual assault is being defunded. Are you having ongoing conversations at the ministry level about why? And my second question is: You obviously still have clients that you are serving, you're assisting. People are still walking through the door. What are you saying to them?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: We've had many, many discussions in terms of the ministry staff of eastern Ontario, in terms of the victim services division. Those conversations have not gotten anywhere, apart from some money for the stub year, to work towards closure.

In terms of addressing this at a more political level, we've had many meetings with Mr. Yasir Naqvi, who is our MPP in Ottawa. They have not resulted in any shift in this decision.

We will be bringing this to the public's attention next week. We wanted to have this presentation to you folks first. Ideally, we would never want to bring this thing to a head publicly. It's disturbing enough for our clients that they've already gotten notice that services may terminate on July 31.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I think we can help you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for the presentation. You mentioned that The Men's Project is one of four agencies in Canada and was the first in North America as of 1999.

Mr. Rick Goodwin: The first service in Ontario funded by the province.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Oh, okay. The other three agencies: Where are they located, and when were they established? Are we seeing more male-focused services being introduced at the same time that Ontario is moving away? What's the history?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: The first one in Canada was in Vancouver, the BC Society for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse. BC, as you may know, has been historically seen as more progressive in advances within the justice system, so maybe it's not surprising that they were the first in Canada. We were the second, with Victoria being the third, and there is an agency out of Montreal called Cripphase, which would be the fourth. We know there is a new centre that's being built in Calgary, because I was there last week, training their staff on how to run these services.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: In the US—you said that you're going to train the US army.

Mr. Rick Goodwin: Yes. There's not one bricks-and-mortar agency dedicated to this issue in the US. At the same time, we have a US partner agency and we have an Australian partner agency, and through that work with

our partners, we now have the ability to train staff at US army bases.

The US army, of all places, is now institutionalizing addressing this issue of sexual violence against men. In the US army, more men are sexually assaulted than women, and this is the reality they face.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: In other jurisdictions, would it be through generic victims' services agencies that supports would be delivered?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: It could very well be that, and they may be able to refer to a family-service-type agency to provide a short-term engagement.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: But the difference is that you're delivering these long-term interventions?

Mr. Rick Goodwin: We do the short-term program, which only the ministry was funding us for. They were not interested in long-term therapy, despite the research on this issue. Again, the funding that we have lost now was covering our short-term engagement.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Mr. Goodwin, for your presentation this morning.

The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment is now in recess. We will reconvene this afternoon at 3:30.

The committee recessed from 1013 to 1531.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. We would like to welcome the presenters and guests who are here with us this afternoon.

I will once again state the mandate of this committee, for our afternoon guests. We're here to listen to your experiences as survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses.

However, I do want to stress that we do not have the power to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

TORONTO WORKERS' HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGAL CLINIC

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call on our first presenter this afternoon, the Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic. Please come forward. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please start by stating your names.

Ms. Linda Vannucci: My name is Linda Vannucci.

Mr. John Bartolomeo: Good afternoon. My name is John Bartolomeo.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And begin any time.

Ms. Linda Vannucci: Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you this afternoon about this important subject of harassment. I'm the lawyer/director at Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic. With me is the

staff lawyer. We field calls every day about harassment at work.

We're with Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic. We're a community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario. We're one of 80 clinics in the province, and we specialize in workers' rights. We're considered a specialty clinic. Unlike a neighbourhood clinic that's geared towards a local community, our mandate is province-wide. We have a very specific purpose: to provide legal advice and representation to non-unionized, low-wage workers who face health and safety problems at work. We've done this for 25 years. We've been appearing before the Ontario Labour Relations Board on behalf of workers who lose their jobs for raising health and safety concerns. They raise their concerns by complaining to the employer, by calling a Ministry of Labour inspector. Sometimes they're fired for even saying they're going to call a Ministry of Labour inspector.

We also act for people who are post-prevention—that is, people who are injured on the job—with respect to workers' compensation claims.

We have a community legal worker who does community education and outreach programs to settlement agencies and apprenticeship programs regarding workers' rights, and these programs are aimed at vulnerable workers.

Where we feel the law is deficient, we engage in law reform initiatives. We provide information about health and safety hazards that workers face in their employment, and advice about their rights under the law.

Our activities are controlled by a board of directors from the community.

Our clients may vary. They can be new Canadians who work in small, non-unionized workplaces—well, there are always people who work in non-union workplaces. They can also be workers who are assigned to larger workplaces but through temporary agencies and who have very precarious employment. We respond to inquiries from young workers who don't know their rights.

To qualify for our services, clients have to meet the legal aid eligibility criteria; that is, they're non-unionized and are very low-wage workers. In other words, they have no resources to go to private bar lawyers or to take matters into their own hands in that matter.

Workplace harassments can create dangerous working conditions that can lead to serious harm. According to a 2014 Angus Reid survey, three in 10 Canadians say they have been subject to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or sexually charged talk on the job, and a vast majority, four in five, say they never reported the behaviour to their employers. This is very telling. The key problem, in our regard, is how to get people to report and get these problems resolved at the workplace.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, workplace harassment is very broadly defined to be engaging in the course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker that is known or ought reasonably to be known as

unwelcome. This can capture a broad range of behaviours.

At the clinic, we've seen episodes that would fit within this definition and we receive a very broad range of calls. Some can be very serious, involving unwanted sexual advances and actions that really amount to physical assault at work. They can amount to things like repeatedly being yelled at by a boss or a co-worker and very demanding and humiliating behaviour such as, "I need that report right now, so let's get with it."

There are cases where a worker is isolated by a group of co-workers who don't like the worker and refuse to speak to them. The complaint of that worker often goes ignored.

People who are overworked and can't meet unrealistic deadlines and are reminded verbally daily and pressured daily—"Remember, I can get you fired," as said by one supervisor; office assistants who are regularly called "stupid" by their boss; a warehouse worker who's referred to as a "moron" in front of colleagues: These are just a few of many, many examples that we see.

In many of those workplaces in those examples I just referred to, there was a written health and safety harassment policy in place. It just wasn't followed. In some cases in smaller workplaces, the harasser is the boss. If you have a workplace with five people, how is a harassment policy going to be effectively enforced in that workplace?

Many of the workers, like the examples I referred to, end up developing anxiety and depression and having their doctor sign them off work. The lucky ones will qualify for EI sickness benefit, because usually in this wage category they don't have a short-term disability plan at work, so they're reduced to 55% of their net wages. They suffer quite a loss of income and that only lasts for 15 weeks. In those examples, they recover while off work and then end up looking for other work, so the harassment really is never addressed in these types of workplaces.

Litigation is after the fact. They're out of the workplace. They may receive some compensation. A person can apply to the Human Rights Tribunal. We deal with those matters as well. There can be other remedies, such as a posting of the workplace, that the Human Rights Tribunal can order. However, more often than not, the issues remain in reference to the other workers, and the general culture and climate at the workplace remain unaddressed. Someone else will be treated to similar disrespectful behaviour. All the workers I mentioned lost their livelihood as a result of workplace harassment.

The government has proposed a number of solutions to this problem in It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment. I think this plan is a good first step, but the solutions seem to revolve around strengthening the employer's obligations to investigate harassment, create a code of conduct, the hiring of specialized teams of inspectors and increasing employer education about workplace harassment.

We feel that there should be further steps taken and have four recommendations. The first one is that the

Ministry of Labour operations policy—this is the policy that the inspectors use to go in and enforce the health and safety act—should state quite explicitly that harassment is a workplace hazard that should be taken seriously and investigated. The act should be amended so that employers have an obligation to protect workers from harassment. That isn't currently in the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

1540

The code of practice that's proposed should have a positive obligation on the employer to create and maintain a working environment where employees are treated with dignity, integrity and respect in the workplace.

We endorse the proposal of the specialized team of inspectors who are knowledgeable about harassment and its effects. Where there's a complaint, we think that Ministry of Labour inspectors should attend the workplace and actually evaluate the investigation, its outcome and its efficiency. The inspector should have the authority to substitute his or her decision for that of the workplace decision-maker. The mere existence of a workplace harassment policy cannot be treated as adequate for ensuring a harassment-free workplace. We've learned that since the time when Bill 168 came into place.

In addition to increasing employer education, equal emphasis needs to be placed on educating workers about their rights—about their rights, actually—in relation to workplace harassment and what they can do about it.

John is going to take it from here.

Mr. John Bartolomeo: I want to address the inclusion of harassment under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. When the government passed Bill 168 to add workplace violence and workplace harassment to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, violence and harassment were treated differently. The difference was noticed by decisions of the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

We handle unlawful reprisal cases: people who are terminated or reprisal against for making health and safety complaints. The difference in terms of what rights were afforded to workers who made complaints about violence versus harassment was noted, and our submission makes a couple of references to decisions that contemplate and effectively said that if the Legislature had intended similar protections vis-à-vis violence and harassment, it would have done so explicitly. As this was not done, the labour board has said in a couple of decisions that there is no right to a harassment-free workplace.

Our concern is that any proposals must include the protection that workers do have that right. Whether or not it is achievable depends on whether or not clear recommendations are made such that workers have the right to protection. One of the proposals we made was the inclusion of the duties that employers, supervisors and workers have with respect to workplace harassment. That inclusion, in our view, would open the field up to the Ministry of Labour and their inspectors to take a more involved role.

Our concern in what is colloquially known as the internal responsibility system, where employers and

workers are supposed to work it out amongst themselves without oversight or involvement, is that no one will be there to go behind the decisions and go behind the policy. As the amendments to Bill 168 came, an employer was expected to have a program and policy in place. Whether or not it's good and whether or not it's followed is not something the ministry can come in and check for. That's just the way the legislation is.

Our proposal is to include it as a duty. Further to that, we suggest a code of practice that recognizes dignity and respect for workers. Included in that would be the expectation that the Ministry of Labour's inspectors can evaluate substantively whether or not it has been followed and substitute their own decision and write orders to protect workers.

Losing one's job is difficult, as is enduring the harassment. What we do as practitioners is try to find compensation for people who have lost their jobs. But does that repair the damage to the workplace? It does not. Does it fix the workplace in the sense that someone has been educated on what is and is not correct? It does not. So by creating a code of practice we have something to measure.

More about the inspector's role will be from Linda.

Ms. Linda Vannucci: Just to be specific about that, what we're talking about is, right now in the Occupational Health and Safety Act, what is often relied upon in dealing with a lot of different workplace hazards beyond harassment is the "general duty" clause in section 25, where employers are required to take all reasonable precautions to protect workers.

I guess what we're proposing is that harassment be subsumed in section 25, which would then give inspectors the authority to enforce that section under section 57, where inspectors can write orders and order compliance with the law.

Where violence is already in there, we want harassment in there as well.

Beyond that, we're proposing that the inspector be able to go into the workplace, look at the investigation—in most cases in our review, there hasn't been an investigation—cause an investigation, determine an outcome and write orders that will stop the harassment in the workplace. That's the only way to ensure that people like our clients are protected.

It's very frustrating to have to ask people who are quite distressed from harassment, "Well, does your workplace have a policy?" They say, "Well, yes. I see it posted, and I've tried to get some help with that policy," and they're still in the same situation: no help at all.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining.

Ms. Linda Vannucci: Oh, one minute remaining? Okay, then I guess we'll wrap it up.

Harassment education: Do you want to speak a bit about that?

Mr. John Bartolomeo: I just wanted to add, on the notion of education, that workers should have just as much education as the employers have. But as well, they

should be made aware that there is recourse to the government, to the Ministry of Labour, beyond just what the employer is—if there is a problem at work, there should be no barrier to them contacting the occupational health and safety branch or calling for an inspector to come, as opposed to having to follow a workplace policy. With that education, we hope that workers have enough within their arsenal to protect themselves.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you this afternoon will be from our PC caucus: MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you very much for your presentation. We have had a number of presentations from people who have worked within the hospitality industry specifically. I wonder if you could provide a breakdown. It doesn't have to be precise, but what I'm looking for is, where are the hot spots? Where are the issues? The feeling of the previous presenter was that the hospitality industry and the individuals who are working within it either don't understand or do not have their rights clearly articulated. Can you share with the committee a bit of a breakdown? I understand that you do exclusively work with non-unionized staff, so it will already skew it, but I'm interested, if you have that.

Ms. Linda Vannucci: I think our experience in terms of hospitality would be the small workplaces, like restaurants. We have had complaints from restaurant workers.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: So it's more related to the size as opposed to the industry?

Ms. Linda Vannucci: I think so, actually. Retail, restaurant, warehousing—

Mr. John Bartolomeo: Because we deal with smaller employers, these are generally small businesses where the individual owner is in charge of everything. That's where we find most of our caseload from.

With respect to the hospitality industry, a good number of cases also have the age/power imbalance. These are young people, teenagers, who are expected to participate in terms of the internal responsibility system with just as much force as a unionized workplace like the automotive industry.

Ms. Linda Vannucci: We've also had male-dominated workplaces where there are a lot of complaints from women who are working in warehouses and car dealerships, places with a minority of young women working in an environment of men. So there's that as well.

Not many institutional workers—because those are mostly unionized environments—unless they're temporary workers.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for the presentation and the very specific recommendations. It's very helpful.

1550

You mentioned initially that some of the clients you serve who fall through the gaps of the current legislation are people who are being harassed by the employer in a

small workplace where there's only a handful of employees. These proposals that you've made, how would they address that? They would address the situation where an employer is the harasser in a very small workplace?

Ms. Linda Vannucci: Well, they would address that situation in that if there's a workplace policy that isn't enforced and there's no investigation that takes place favourable to the person being harassed, then they can call a Ministry of Labour specialized inspector who knows how to deal with workplace harassment to come out and review the situation and make orders, if necessary.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Because currently there's no ability to do that.

Ms. Linda Vannucci: Unless the ministry chose to interpret the general duty clause to allow the inspector to do that, which at this point they don't, at this point the ministry's response to a harassment complaint if a worker calls in is, "Do you have a policy? Ask your employer to enforce the policy." There's no visit from an inspector.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. And the other question is, on page 2 you have some bullet points explaining examples of harassment but only the first one refers specifically to sexual harassment. Would your recommendations deal with harassment more broadly? Or were you looking at these recommendations as dealing with gender-based harassment and sexual harassment?

Ms. Linda Vannucci: We were looking at it more broadly, including gender-based harassment, in terms of enforcement, because right now sexual harassment is covered by the Human Rights Code and so the remedy there is to go to the Human Rights Tribunal if you're harassed. That's usually resorted to only after a worker has left the workplace. It's pretty difficult to stay in the workplace and work while there's a pending action at the Human Rights Tribunal. So if it's all looked at under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, that would invoke an inspectorate where there is not an inspectorate at the Human Rights Tribunal that would go out and address complaints.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from our Liberal caucus, from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: First of all, thank you for the presentation. I think I learned a lot and there was a lot of good advice.

Currently, in your mind, what are some of the factors that discourage victims from coming forward, in particular the newcomers? Because I think that they're particularly vulnerable, given their short time in this country. That's my first question.

My second question is—I want to give you a chance to highlight some of your recommendations—what would say are the top three best practices for effective changes you would like to see adopted?

Ms. Linda Vannucci: I think the reason why people aren't reporting in terms of workplace harassment is fear

of reprisal, fear of being fired if the harassment is from the boss. Often we hear workers report that the employer's answer—if it isn't direct employer harassment, if it's a supervisor as well—is, "Frank's been working here 25 years; that's the way he is," that kind of thing. They're afraid if they take it further and go outside the workplace, they'll be fired. I think that's the number one thing, particularly with newcomers or people with precarious employment.

In terms of the top three recommendations—

Mr. Han Dong: But if the person is already fired, let's say—let go—do you think there's something preventing them from coming forward and seeking your assistance?

Mr. John Bartolomeo: I think the difficulty is that what we do is remedial. This is after the fact, after you've been fired, and so we don't get to address the situation at heart. Our key point is that with an inspectorate that will go in and assess harassment complaints if a worker is not satisfied, the worker keeps their job and the employer is educated and made aware of what they are doing that is wrong. By allowing the inspectorate to go in and take effect and make recommendations, the employer is educated, the worker gets to keep their job, and they aren't sitting at home quietly, making themselves ill, not saying anything to anyone.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you both very much for coming and appearing before this committee this afternoon. We invite you, if you wish, to sit in our audience.

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN BURLINGTON

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We continue now with our next set of presenters. I would like to call forward the representatives with the Canadian Federation of University Women Burlington. Have a seat. Make yourselves comfortable. Ladies, you will have 15 minutes to address our committee. That will be followed by questions for you.

Please start by stating your names and begin any time.

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: I'm Marianne Singh-Waraich. This is Eleanor Christie. We are the co-chairs of the advocacy committee of CFUW Burlington.

CFUW Burlington would like to thank the provincial government for this initiative and wishes to express its support for the changes in the sex education curriculum to be implemented this September. We think this will help Ontario students to develop healthier and more sensitive attitudes to sexual relationships by giving them the appropriate vocabulary, helping them to better understand their own sexuality and the consequences of their decisions for others. It will encourage them to develop a sense of self-worth that enables them to seek clear and informed consent from their partners before engaging in intimate relations.

The Ontario Human Rights Code defines sexual harassment as "engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought ... to be known to be

unwelcome." In preparing for this presentation, it struck us once again just how pervasive sexual assault and harassment are in our society.

Sharing our experiences around the table, we came up with a life cycle of incidents. In childhood, one of us had her vaginal area explored at the age of five by a teenage boy. Two of us experienced sexual harassment at university in the process of our education by university tutors who retaliated for rebuffed advances by downgrading our papers. As a young married woman, consulting our local family services bureau about marital difficulties, one of us was invited by the middle-aged counsellor to sit on his lap.

In the workforce, I was chased around my classroom by a fellow teacher. Dancing at a sedate house party, an excellent dancer, while twirling me madly around the floor, cupped my breast in a tight embrace. A superintendent hugged me too close for comfort on meeting me in his office on business. A colleague had an affair with a grade 10 student.

One of our daughters dropped out of Waterloo university in the early 1990s after an initiation week in which students were frequently plied with alcohol, encouraged to drink bottoms up, paired with a partner and a mattress and given a prize for the couple that best imitated sexual intercourse. She dropped out in November.

Another daughter was molested as a teen while working at a medical office part-time.

One of our friends, suffering from early Alzheimer's, was assaulted in a nursing home by a fellow patient who thought she was his wife. The staff cannot be everywhere all the time, but a better patient-staff ratio might prevent this type of assault.

While sharing these experiences, we noted they had two things in common: We had not discussed them with anyone and had certainly not issued official complaints, nor had we been provocative in either appearance or behaviour when these events occurred.

In the early 1990s, as the OSSTF representative to a Wentworth county district school board committee that created a sexual harassment policy for the board, I felt confident that with these policies in place in the workforce, harassment would cease since there would be consequences attached to such behaviour and women would no longer have to be proactively on the defensive at all times to avoid being victimized and could work with men on an equal footing in a safe environment. Alas, recent events have clearly shown that this is not the case. The most notorious is that of Jian Ghomeshi on the CBC, a case with which I am sure you are all familiar.

When we examine all these cases, what jumps out at us are two things: Such experiences are common, but women tend not to share them. Either from shame that they happened at all or from fear of the consequences of coming forward, they remain silent. Speaking out will mean a lot of time spent with reputations questioned, because mostly in these cases it is a question of he said-she said, or fear of offending the perpetrator, who is usually in a position of power as an employer or has greater physical strength.

Indeed, had not a lot of women come forward, Jian would probably still be hosting his CBC program. One woman did use the CBC's complaint procedures but got nowhere. Was she not believed, or did what happened to her just not matter?

Too often the victim is blamed, yet if women don't complain—and our own histories bear out the fact that they do not—the offender gets away with it scot-free. It is this impunity that is so pernicious because it perpetuates the problem.

1600

We were too young to experience cyberassault, but it is very common now. The hypersexualization of young children in suggestive advertising and popular music idols who twerk and are scantily clad prepare children to accept this as normal sexual behaviour.

Sexting—sending sexualized images online to a friend—is common, but the senders do not realize that these pictures will be online forever and can be used to blackmail them. Girls and boys are induced to remove their clothes and send photographs to their cyber-friends—sometimes adults who pretend to be the same age—which are then used as child pornography. The current incidents, reported by the Toronto Star on May 7, resulted in 17 Canadian arrests and 41 worldwide.

Cyberbullying has led to some well-known recent suicides, as in the cases of Rehtaeh Parsons and Amanda Todd. In the case of Rehtaeh, pictures of her assault were spread as trophy photos by the perpetrators.

How long have we been listening to complaints by female RCMP recruits and soldiers? The new report by former Supreme Court Justice Marie Deschamps makes clear that women in uniform endure a toxic work environment and are often the target of vulgar name-calling, sexual innuendoes and jokes, harassment and assault. Much of it is condoned or ignored by senior military leaders. The notorious case of Trenton's Colonel Russell Williams, who progressed from harassment and panty raids to murder, clearly did not happen in a vacuum.

The “undeniable problem of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the (Canadian Armed Forces) ... requires direct and sustained action,” she writes, and “the military has refused to acknowledge the ‘extent and pervasiveness of the problem of inappropriate sexual misconduct.’”—Toronto Star, May 1.

Chief of defence staff Tom Lawson said it would take a sustained effort. There was no quick fix. Military leaders are blind to the poisonous culture. Mandatory harassment training is laughed at, with trainers being complicit. Officers who want to act often get shut down by their superiors. Zero tolerance, says Justice Deschamps, is easily spoken of, but rarely implemented. Women do not complain for fear of ruining their careers. There is that impunity again.

A similar situation exists in the sports world. Missoula, a recently published book by Jon Krakauer, explores just how a city, including the police, colludes in

protecting its sports heroes from the consequences of their assaults.

Eleanor?

Ms. Eleanor Christie: Burlington is the city of Leslie Mahaffy, a teenager abducted and killed by Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka, and also of Nina de Villiers, a young woman abducted and murdered by Yeo while jogging in broad daylight. Another woman was murdered on our local beach a few years ago while sunbathing. This year, a woman was found in her apartment, murdered by her former partner.

Women are regularly assaulted and often killed by estranged husbands. We are considered the best mid-sized community in Canada, according to some official accounts. But what, then, of the others?

Over the years, institutions have been developed to help survivors of sexual violence recover. Halton Women's Place, our local shelter, has 30 beds. Last year, it served 265 women and turned away 390 for lack of space. It provided shelter elsewhere in the community for 472. It provided court support to 162. Some 80% of these women have suffered sexual assault and need ongoing support, its executive director told me.

Clearly, the need is greater than the supply of help. Out of an annual budget of \$3 million, the shelter fundraises \$600,000, which takes up the time of one and a half of the six staff members.

A big roadblock is the lack of social and supportive housing. In the early days of the shelter's history, clients stayed for four to six weeks, but currently, the average stay is six months, because there is nowhere for these women to go. An increase in social housing would enable the shelter to service many more of the 390 they had to turn away last year.

SAVIS, our sexual assault services centre, provided help to 579 clients in the counselling program and fielded 579 crisis calls, plus it served clients at the Vanier Centre for Women, who received counselling. Current funding for these excellent services is inadequate and needs to be long-term and sustainable.

This year, Burlington also hosted Dr. Sharif Tadros, who had sexually abused three patients in his clinic. He had been allowed to continue practising while under investigation, with the proviso that he could only treat males and was to have a sign up to that effect. He blithely ignored such direction, and, had it not been for the Toronto Star outing him, would have continued to practise with men and women. I think the OMA is remiss in not checking up on restrictions. He is one of 20 doctors in the province in this situation.

We have read “The Way Forward,” published by the Ontario government in March 2015 and applaud it, as we do the series of government ads illustrating harassment we have seen on TV. This 40-page document is an excellent plan, and we look forward to its full implementation. We would like to see clause 1 strengthened, however, to make the policy one of zero tolerance.

Nevertheless, the big sticking point in our view continues to be impunity. When only 33 cases of sexual

assault out of every 1,000 are currently reported to police and only three lead to conviction, all the plans in the world are not going to solve the problem. They need effective implementation. What can the government offer to change this?

Sexual violence and harassment are expressions of misogyny and rape culture and related to other issues of gender inequality. We need a generational change in attitudes to consent and healthy relationships. We need the co-operation of men of good will. It was heartening to see that a group of young men in a high school in Ottawa, in response to Rehtaeh Parsons's death, had formed a group in their high school to prevent sexual violence. Her stepfather speaks at high schools to warn teens of the dangers of cyberbullying. We need more of this. We need to mobilize men in society at large.

Immigrant communities in Ontario struggle with additional forms of violence against women, such as early forced marriage, polygamy, female genital mutilation and honour killing. Aboriginal women bear an especially heavy burden, as do the disabled. These vulnerable minorities need extra attention.

Marianne attended the UN's Commission on the Status of Women meetings both last year and this year in March as part of the CFUW delegation and was impressed by the HeForShe campaign initiated last year. This year, she attended a workshop entitled hashtag #ImamsForShe. The concept clearly has resonance. Perhaps it could be encouraged in Ontario.

There are many organizations that have been working in the field for years to combat these problems. They are really the experts in this area and their experience should be utilized. A number of them, including CFUW, have worked together to develop A Blueprint for Canada's National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Girls, as mandated by the UN. It is meant to be a road map covering content and process for defining and implementing a national plan, but it would be a good resource for our provincial government.

A national plan would provide a framework and establish national standards. The provincial government could call on the federal government to create such a plan. It would need to include adequate funding of counselling and support services—short-term and long-term—free legal aid, and have sexual assault and rape crisis centres available 24/7.

In the judiciary system we need to review the evidentiary burden to get a better conviction rate. We need to consider access and custody decisions in light of sexual violence as well as cross-jurisdictional enforcement of custody and other court orders.

In addition, we need dedicated teams and specialized trained judges. Increased cultural security training is also required for police, who are the first responders generally, medical personnel and crown attorneys.

We need to ensure employers, educational and public institutions take effective measures to prevent, investigate and remedy sexual harassment.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute left in your presentation.

Ms. Eleanor Christie: Okay. I'll be fast.

We need consistency in policies and legislation within and across jurisdictions and equal access for all women. We need reliable data collection and adequate human and financial resources. We need not only a consultation such as this, with all stakeholders, survivors and front-line workers, but also time-bound goals, measured against a baseline.

But, most of all, we need accountability. Had the press not given so much attention to the notorious cases of sexual assault we have cited, we are convinced that nothing would have happened to these perpetrators. It is only the merciless and ceaseless glare of publicity that made them cringe and that enabled effective penalties to be imposed. That should not be necessary.

All women deserve to be treated with respect at all times. It is their right as human beings. As Hillary Clinton stated, "Women's rights are human rights." We ask ourselves, "How long will women have to wait for those rights to be enforced everywhere for everyone?"

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Right on time.

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: We have prepared a list of recommendations, which I believe—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We would like you to hand that in to us, if you would.

Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

1610

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much. That's a very comprehensive list of recommendations. I wish we would have a world that would have all of those recommendations implemented.

One thing: In recommendation 16, you talked about HeForShe, and I think you said #ImamsForShe?

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: That was a new thing this year at the UN. I attended that workshop.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes. I recently got a notice about the University of Waterloo officially starting up a HeForShe initiative. I wondered if you could just share a little bit more about HeForShe and particularly #ImamsForShe. I think that's really—

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: I was delighted to see that title advertised as a workshop, #ImamsForShe. It was an imam from Indonesia; it was at the UN. I think there were 9,000 NGO delegates this year because of the Beijing Declaration's 20th anniversary. This imam quoted the Quran and said that women are equal in Islam; that certainly they can go out and work because, of course, the Prophet's wife—his first wife—supported him. She was a successful business woman. He also said that if women go out to work, the money that they make should remain theirs because in the Quran it's the husband's responsibility to support the family. It was very progressive but it was based on the Quran, and I found it very encouraging.

I hope that many imams will take a leaf out of that Indonesian imam's book because I think it's something that's really essential. I think, very often, imams who are currently practising in Canada may come from areas

where very literal interpretations of the Quran are held, and I think that that is having an influence on their congregations. So I think this program is excellent.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our Liberal caucus: MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Good afternoon, ladies. Nice to see you here. What a comprehensive presentation and list. I would like to echo my colleague's comments on the thoroughness of your recommendations—deeply appreciated. I know I have to be quick, but I couldn't help sharing this with you: a reflection in the media this morning about the penalties received in the NFL for "Deflategate" being more than the penalties levied on a gentleman who was seen on national television assaulting his wife and then dragging her from an elevator.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Yes. Fair enough.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Right? An absolute disgrace, really, because what does that say? Anyway, that's in parenthesis.

Justice Marie Deschamps in her comments about the military—I wonder if you could give us some thoughts on women in uniform and what you think we might do to assist that profession in making women feel more safe and equitable?

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: Well, I think what jumped out at us—because we gave you a few samples of the life cycle thing that five of us had experienced. We could have given you 10 pages, but women simply don't discuss them.

I think women in uniform—which is a strict hierarchy where you obey your superiors; it's even more difficult to stand up for yourself. We've listened to these complaints for years, so I was very happy to see the report. I think even today, this very same Tom Lawson that was quoted before has said that he's not going to implement all those things, and I think that this is a serious problem. Superiors shut down lower-ranking officers. What hope does a female soldier have of justice?

It's the impunity. The impunity is the thing that struck us over and over again. I was interested in a previous speaker, who was also explaining—because it's a very common situation—that you complain and you're fired.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's absolutely challenging. Our labour minister is looking into this as part of the overall action plan. Our recommendations are going to help shape that as well.

Thank you again. I think my time is probably up, Madam Chair, so I'll cede the floor to my colleagues. Thank you again.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from our PC caucus: MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you. As a current CFUW for Orangeville and district—

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: I'm sorry; I can't hear you.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I just said, as a current member of the CFUW in Orangeville, thank you for coming.

We've all heard the stories. You started your presentation with a number of them from your members. As disturbing as the stories are, what is most disturbing, or equally disturbing, is the fact that none of those perpetrators were stopped.

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: That's right.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: So we come back to this recidivism—I practised the word. Where does it stop? If we don't have a system in place that ensures that person cannot do it again, by its very nature we are implying, as a society, that it's okay. And it's not okay. You have a lot of great recommendations here, but how do we get to the point where we can stop the people who are causing the harm?

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: I think the only way is for women to speak up, but individual women are reluctant. Take the case of Jian Ghomeshi, right? This was so discouraging to me, having worked on harassment policy in my board. It solved nothing. The same thing is going on today. The only thing that's going to cure it is a change.

If there was gender equality, I don't think this would happen. I think a lot of men feel threatened in many professions—possibly in the military, too. They worry about their promotion chances, if there's going to be equity in terms of promotions and things like that, and their way to deal with it sometimes is just to intimidate. This is not about sex; it's intimidation. They're power plays. They get their jollies from scaring people or intimidating them.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You were going to say something else. I saw you leaning in toward the microphone.

Ms. Eleanor Christie: Well, it's the power thing. You feel you're going to lose. We mentioned the one thing about my daughter who was assaulted by a doctor in Burlington when she was working for him. Now, she didn't tell me she quit the job, but I found out because her mother was head of nursing at Mac and she dealt with it. But my daughter would not report him, because she wanted to apply to medical school and she felt that the doctors in Burlington would blackball her if she reported him.

Now, she ended up getting into medical school, but she never reported him. But then the women in Burlington, the nursing people at Mohawk and McMaster, never sent another person to him; that's how they handled it. But if she had reported him, it was his word against her word, and he was powerful and she wasn't.

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: That's usually the equation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, I want to thank you very much for coming and informing this committee this afternoon. Your information was really useful. Thank you.

Ms. Marianne Singh-Waraich: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I invite you to join the audience now, if you wish to.

MS. ELIZABETH GRACE

MS. SUSAN VELLA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters to come forward. They are Elizabeth Grace and Susan Vella. I hope I'm saying your names correctly.

Ms. Susan Vella: Absolutely.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Make yourselves comfortable. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and then they will ask you some questions. Start by stating your names for the record. Begin anytime.

Ms. Susan Vella: Susan Vella.

Ms. Elizabeth Grace: Elizabeth Grace. Good afternoon, Madam Chair and committee members. Susan Vella and myself are appearing today in our personal capacities as civil lawyers who together have almost 50 years—I'm afraid to say; when I added it up, I was shocked—of experience working in the area of sexual violence and harassment, what we really call sexual abuse.

Because sexual abuse is recognized as a wrong in all of the areas of law—civil, criminal and administrative law—we have found that our work in the civil justice system really overlaps and intersects with the criminal justice system and with administrative processes, criminal injuries compensation and Human Rights Tribunal proceedings. We believe that we can bring to the table a valuable perspective that will hopefully speak to some of the concerns of this committee.

We've prepared a brief. I believe it has been circulated. It sets out our submission in detail. It briefly describes the work that we've done both individually and collaboratively—because we're in private practice and we work at separate firms—in the sexual abuse area. Our CVs are at tabs A and B.

Our brief also includes an executive summary of our recommendations, which target three legislative areas that we believe are in need of reform. The first is the Victims' Bill of Rights and the regulation under that statute, the second is the Limitations Act, and third is the Ontario Disability Support Program Act and the Ontario Works Act and the general regulations under those two acts.

1620

In the body of our submission, we set out in detail the amendments that we recommend be made and the justifications for those amendments.

At tabs C to F, we've included the legislation and the regulations that we're dealing with, really for the committee's ease of reference.

The legislative changes that we are recommending are simple, they're straightforward to implement and, on the whole, they require no new funding from government.

We've divided up our presentation. I'm going to address the first two areas of reform that we've identified: the Victims' Bill of Rights and the Limitations Act. Susan Vella is going to speak to the third area, the ODSP

and Ontario Works schemes, and also offer some concluding remarks.

The Victims' Bill of Rights is really a cornerstone statute because it deals with the justice system in an inclusive way, and it's quite exceptional in that regard. It covers both the criminal and the civil justice systems. As such, it's an important vehicle for effecting many of the changes we believe are needed in this province. It was introduced in 1995. Frankly, it's a stale piece of legislation. It's underappreciated, underutilized and needs to be modernized.

The Victims' Bill of Rights includes a preamble and section 2 sets out some very laudatory principles, kind of guiding principles. Both of these need amending and we've set out some proposed amendments in our brief. But our recommendations are really targeted at remedying the problems that we've seen in the criminal justice system through our clients who are involved in a civil process but have also been involved in a criminal process. Our recommendations are aimed at providing greater input and information for victims of sexual crimes so that they can more meaningfully participate in the criminal justice system.

We've identified the regulation under the Victims' Bill of Rights that we see as a means of practically fleshing out how those guiding principles can work in practice, and we've stressed the need for greater consistency. We've both been troubled over the years to see our clients, who come from all over Ontario—the inconsistency and discrepant approaches and practices by police and crown attorneys in different jurisdictions. There's a real need for consistency.

Again with the Victims' Bill of Rights, we focused on sections 3 and 4 of that act. These are the sections that deal with civil proceedings. I would suggest that probably our most bold recommendation relating to section 3 is a new provision that states that there is no cap, which is an upper limit, on damages for pain and suffering awarded to victims of sexual assault. Section 3 of the act is the section that deals with damages or compensation. If you're able to go to page 9 of our brief, very briefly here we've set out—towards the bottom of the page, underlined—the heading and the very simple language that could be added to section 3: "There is no upper limit on the non-pecuniary damages"—which are the pain and suffering damages—"that may be awarded to a victim of sexual assault."

Adding this provision would cost the government nothing, but it would bring Ontario in line with British Columbia. That province's Court of Appeal, unlike our Court of Appeal, actually had the opportunity back in 1996 to say that the cap does not apply in sexual assault cases. The upper limit does not apply.

Section 4 of the Victims' Bill of Rights also needs amendment. This section uses outdated, inconsistent, ambiguous language and it is overdue for an overhaul. The most substantive change we see being necessary to section 4 is set out at the top of page 14 in our brief. It's a simple change. It's the addition of the underlined words

to explicitly expand section 4 to cover civil proceedings in which crime victims seek redress for harms, not only from the person who was convicted of the crime, but also from all those responsible for the harms.

This simple change would recognize that many times there's more than just the individual perpetrator who shares responsibility for the harms. We need only think, for example, of clergy abuse of children. The courts have already said that religious organizations share responsibility for the harms caused by their clergy members' misconduct. This needs to be enshrined and recognized in the legislation.

Since time is short, moving on to the Limitations Act: The government's action plan is committed to removing the limitation period for any civil sexual assault. Nova Scotia, and British Columbia to a lesser extent, have already gone in this direction and Ontario needs to catch up.

Starting at page 16 of our brief, we have set out amendments that we believe will achieve the goal of removing any limitation period. In summary, that goal includes three things. Number 1, if you go to page 20—it's the text just above the bulleted point. It includes adding a definition of sexual assault in the act, a definition that will make it clear that sexual assault includes all misconduct of a sexual nature. This is the language that is used in Nova Scotia's and British Columbia's statutes.

Currently, there is reference to sexual assault in the act, but it's not defined. It's not a defined term. What that means practically is that it doesn't capture all the forms of sexual misconduct, for instance, sexual exploitation. If it falls short of actual touching or a fear of being touched sexually—so you think of perhaps a child who is manipulated into exposing herself in person or over the Internet. That's not caught by the Limitations Act. It's not caught in the definition of sexual assault. That's the first thing. There needs to be a definition of sexual assault in the act that is more inclusive.

Second, the act needs to get rid of the current distinction between sexual assault that occurs inside a power-dependency relationship and sexual assault that occurs outside of a power-dependency relationship. An example of inside would be, say, teacher-student, where there's power inequality. Outside would be, say, an instance of assault by a stranger or perhaps a co-worker or co-student. We need to get rid of that distinction.

On page 22, we have suggested a very simple way of doing that at the top of the page. It would involve amending or deleting some words, really, from the existing clause 16(1)(h), and would read simply, "There is no limitation period in respect of a proceeding arising from a sexual assault." This way, proceedings arising from sexual assault would be exempted from the act's standard two-year limitation period, and from its 15-year limitation period.

Third, the complicated and cumbersome transition provisions in the Limitations Act—that's section 24 of the act. That section deals with civil claims for compen-

sation brought after 2004 but based on misconduct that occurred before 2004.

1630

If you go to the top of page 25 of our brief, we have proposed a new provision at the top there. Again, it's simple language: "(4.1) A former limitation period is deemed not to have expired before January 1, 2004 in the case of a proceeding arising from a sexual assault." It's simple, as opposed to the convoluted—and they're in the statute, but provisions of "if this, then that." It's simple.

Subsection 24(7) is the next quoted section. We have proposed eliminating the words "sexual assault" from that provision. Subsection 24(7) is the revival section. If a claim is deemed to have expired, the current act allows you, in very restrictive circumstances, to revive the claim and allow the person to bring the claim. We're saying, "No. Don't deal with sexual assault claims in that provision. Delete those."

I'll let my colleague continue.

Ms. Susan Vella: Thank you very much. The theme of our presentation, and the thread that runs through our recommendations and the legislative amendments which you'll see throughout the brief, is enhancing access to meaningful justice. By this we mean achieving accountability for victims, which, in turn, means obtaining accountability from the direct offender, those legally responsible for those harms, and society.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining.

Ms. Susan Vella: Okay. Sorry.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm happy to let them keep going.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We can also make the choice of giving up our questioning time if you would like to continue.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes. This is very good.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll let you—okay.

Ms. Susan Vella: Thank you.

This is consistent with the committee's mandate of making recommendations to improve our response to Ontarians who have experienced sexual violence and harassment.

My colleague has reviewed the recommendations aimed at achieving meaningful accountability from direct offenders and those legally responsible for the harms caused by sexual violence.

I want to pick up on the proposed revisions to the Limitations Act, 2002, and in particular the transition provisions that my friend has been addressing.

I'd like to direct you to page 25 of our brief. The legislation is, for your ease of reference, at tab D. Now, the transition provisions, as my friend has said, of the Limitations Act are found at subsection 24(7) and govern whether and to what extent the act will apply to sexual assaults which occurred prior to January 1, 2004, but are the subject of current civil proceedings for compensation.

Our main recommendation is subsection 24(7), sub (4.1), which has just been reviewed with you. This would

have the effect of removing the limitation defence as a shield behind which both the offender and those legally responsible for the sexual violence can hide, irrespective of the date the assault occurred, as long as the sexual assault is the subject of a current legal proceeding.

The fact of the matter is that in order for a civil lawsuit to be viable for victims of sexual violence, there must be a defendant who is not only legally responsible but has the ability to pay a judgment. This is not often within the means of an average offender. Therefore, without the proposed amendment, the existing provision, which already removes the limitation period defence from direct offenders, is of little meaningful use to the victims.

Without the proposed amendment, victims of historical sexual violence may continue to be deprived of their ability to pursue compensation against those who are legally responsible for this serious form of violence. Furthermore, they will continue to experience the delays in pursuing justice and the increased legal costs in resisting attacks based on the alleged expiry of a limitation period.

Our last substantive area of legislative amendments relates primarily to societal accountability to victims of sexual violence and harassment. It is time to modernize the ODSP and Ontario Works acts. Our written submissions commence at page 26, but I would ask you to go directly to page 31. The associated relevant excerpts from the regulations are reproduced at tabs E and F of our brief.

Briefly, we propose that the awards of compensation issued by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board be exempted from the calculation of income and assets under the relevant regulations of each of the ODSP and Ontario Works. We've given and proposed the exact legislative amendments in our brief. This means that receipt of such awards would not affect a recipient's ongoing eligibility for social assistance or result in a clawback of social assistance benefits.

Second, we propose that the compensation received by victims of sexual violence arising out of sexual abuse, excluding loss of income, also be exempted from the calculation of assets and income under the regulation of those acts. You will see our proposal at pages 31 to 32.

The proposal to exempt compensation, other than compensation for loss of income, related to a claim of sexual assault, which we recommend as a new subsection 46 to subsection 28(1), mirrors the current exemption already granted for awards of compensation made in relation to a claim of abuse at an Indian residential school. This mirrors that exemption.

Furthermore, and in any event, we also recommend that the current limits for exemptions which exist in the regulations for pain-and-suffering compensation awards be raised, in the case of the ODSP, from \$100,000 to \$150,000 and, in the case of Ontario Works, from \$25,000 to \$50,000. Those amendments are found at pages 31 through to 32.

I think it important to note that the limit of \$100,000 in the ODSP Act has never been increased since the date

of proclamation in 1997. Even using the Bank of Canada's inflationary calculator, in 2015 dollars, that amount would be worth \$140,000.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, you have used up your time. I'm going to ask you to wrap up now. Thank you.

Ms. Susan Vella: Thank you.

By taking these measures and legislative amendments, then, none of which will require a significant expenditure of taxpayer dollars, you will be able to take a large step forward towards enhancing accountability of sexual offenders—those legally responsible for the harms—and society, therefore affording victims of sexual violence a better opportunity to heal from these crimes, while improving our response to Ontarians who have experienced sexual violence and harassment.

Thank you so much for your patience.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for coming.

Applause.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: That's the first round of applause they've ever given to any deputants. It was impressive.

Ms. Elizabeth Grace: Hopefully, we've whetted your appetite, and you'll read this brief.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes. We have our next person ready on teleconference, and she has been waiting for a little while. So I will thank you very much for your very thorough presentation. It was very informative. If you would like to join our audience and continue to participate in our public hearing, you're welcome to do so.

MS. SHERRY ANDERSON

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, our next person that we are going to be communicating with is Sherry Anderson. We are going to be speaking to her by teleconference.

Hello, Sherry.

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Hello.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sherry, you are going to be speaking to our committee of 10 members. We will start by telling you that you have got 15 minutes to address our committee. That will then be followed by questions. Please begin any time.

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Thank you very much. I'm just an individual who wants to state what has happened in my own history of sexual abuse and trying to get justice for myself.

1640

About 15 years ago, I did try to bring my father to trial for the sexual abuse he put me through from the age of six through 16. I waited almost a year for the police officer to do his investigation, to talk to my father—and my mother, who knew of the abuse—in the hope and dreams that I could finally have justice for myself.

I was told by the police officer and the crown attorney that my word was not good enough. His word and the

word of my mother, who said she didn't know anything, were more important in the eyes of the law than the victim.

To this day, when I think of what I went through just to try and get a little justice for myself, it's so hard to understand why the victim of a sexual assault is not believed. I didn't go in this for any monetary reasons. I was asking for nothing more than my day in court to have this man charged with the sexual assault of me. After being over 40 years old when I did this and only just learning a year before that I was allowed to even do it—I thought all my chances were gone to have this man brought to justice—to be told that, no, it didn't matter and that the crown didn't think I was worthy enough to be heard in the courtroom—something like this has to change.

I was led to believe by the system that I could voice my fear, tell my story and put all my fears of what he could do to me to rest and that the courts would help me, only to find out within a year that no. Not only did I lose to the court; I lost to a man who laughed at me and said, "See? I told you no one would believe you." He won. To the day he died, he won. I had no recourse. I'm stuck. For the rest of my life now, I'm stuck.

This being said, I have tried for 15 to 20 years to get help for this sexual assault. The programs available to us in Sudbury are so limited that it's a shame to say I'm living in Canada. The groups that are available in Sudbury—there's one. I was just able to get into this group about six months ago, and it has helped me tremendously. But before that I was on waiting list after waiting list to see a counsellor. I was able to get in to one for about five years. I received wonderful treatment from my counsellor. I was better. I stopped seeing her. I had a bad relapse, went to go back and my counsellor was willing to take me but she was no longer allowed to. I wasn't called a critical case at the time so I was put at the bottom of a list to be called by the Sudbury hospital when I could go and see her. That never happened and she retired three years later.

So I'm left in the lurch again. There are no counsellors in Sudbury for someone like me who can't afford private counsellors. I'm on a disability pension for post-traumatic stress from my sexual assault. I get less than \$700 a month. That's my pension. I can't afford another doctor; I can't do it.

I was having a lot of mental problems that they thought were maybe Alzheimer's, because my mind is just so overcome with some of my traumas. I went to see a neurologist and he, by the grace of God, got me to a psychiatrist. Do you know what I was told by that psychiatrist? If I don't take medication, she does not have time for talk therapy. Those are her words, end of quote: "I don't have time for talk therapy for you." So unless I agree to go Seroquel, I'm off her list. I'm out of her service now. I don't think I should have to be drugged in this day and age to have a counsellor talk to me.

I don't have a lot of words to say to you other than you have to start listening to the women who have gone through this trauma. I'm almost 60 years old. I shouldn't

have to still be dealing with bureaucracy to say, in Canada, "Can you please help me pay for something that I need?" There should be a better system.

I think that your system has to be changed to allow—like that woman ahead of me. I don't know who she was, but she spoke about so many things that were true: that we can come forward and know that we're going to be heard; that our voice won't be on deaf ears in the court system; that maybe somehow our government will see fit to give us more programs in the north. Like I say, we have one group in Sudbury, and to get into them is a long waiting list, and cutting the waiting list is not the answer. We need more counsellors up here. We need more facilities to take people of my age group. I can't say how many are in my group, but when I walked in, I couldn't believe my age group of women sitting there who needed this help. I thought I was one of a few.

It's scary to see how many of us actually need help and how many of us have been told we don't deserve to be heard in the courts, that we're too historically old to have our say in court. I just think that legislation has to be taken to help us. My day in court's gone. My man died. I can't get legal justice for myself, but I know there are so many who desperately need this in their healing.

I think, also, if the schools were to start younger—if I had been told at six or seven years old by a trusted teacher that I could go there for help when a family member was abusing me, I'd have gone. I'd have gone in a minute. All we were taught was stranger danger; we aren't taught family danger. These young girls and boys think they're alone, but it is not a stranger. When I saw that video, I thought, "Oh, I guess it doesn't mean my dad. That means a stranger has to do it to me." I think if you could legislate the schools into doing something to help these young kids, it would make a big difference in their lives. If I had had one teacher say to me, "Sherry, is there a problem at home? Was it a stranger or your father?" or an uncle or anyone, I could have said yes, but I wasn't allowed to.

It wasn't a stranger. I hear so many people argue about sex education in school—don't argue sex education. Push it through. Show these young girls and boys what is proper and what isn't proper. Have a lesson for these young kids, stating that if it's a family member—don't be afraid to say, "Is your dad touching you?" The kids won't mind; the kids will thank you. I will tell you, they will thank you if the word "father" or "uncle" is brought into that conversation instead of just "a stranger." You don't know how fearful a little girl is when we don't think we can say, "My father did this. My dad does that." We can't say a stranger did it; we don't know what a stranger is. Our perpetrators are in our own families.

I think if these young kids put forward the effort to just say, "Is it okay if it's dad?"—they'll say it to the teacher or the sex instructor, whoever is in the class. I don't know how it works, but I think you are on the right track of these younger kids having sex education.

That's pretty well all I had to say. I just wanted to voice a victim's opinion here, to let you know that we need so much service up here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sherry, thank you very much for sharing that with us. This is MPP Daiene Vernile and I'm the Chair of this committee. Are you able to take some questions from our committee members? They'd like to ask you a few questions, if that's okay.

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Absolutely.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The first person to speak to you is going to be Liberal MPP Harinder Malhi.

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Hello.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you, Sherry, for sharing your experience. I'm sure it was very difficult to share your story with us.

I just wanted to talk to you about the supports and the justice system. What supports do you think we could put in place in the justice system to make it easier for victims like yourself?

Ms. Sherry Anderson: I think if the police officer had brought me to speak with the district attorney, I would have been able to show him, "It's not words. I'm not lying. You can believe me and you can take a chance in court with me." Don't just assume that he's right. I was never asked in person by the court system, "Is this true?" I know that if he had heard my words and not something written on a piece of paper, it would have made a difference. He could have looked at me and seen my eyes and seen my reaction to any question he would have asked of me, knowing it was not a lie and that my father was the liar in this case.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is going to be from MPP Sylvia Jones.

1650

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you, Ms. Anderson, for reaching out to the committee. You mentioned that you are getting assistance through a group in Sudbury?

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Yes, I am.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Can you share with the committee: Is that a peer support group? What kind of support are you getting?

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Presently, I'm in a group of women, all approximately my own age, who are given learning skills on what triggers our emotional outbursts in our bodies, whether it be a sound or a sight, and it's teaching us how to deal with those emotions on a daily basis. It teaches us how to learn our body signals for fear, of either fight or flight.

For so many years, I didn't know why I would react to a certain sound, or even a television show. The group that I'm in, they're able to show me why I react, why my trauma is the way it is. Being so old, with the trauma so long ago, you would think I wouldn't have any trauma day to day. Now I know why I'll get upset over something which most women would not be upset about.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Are you comfortable with sharing with the committee which organization is assisting you in Sudbury?

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Voices for Women.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thanks very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Peggy Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your courage in speaking out about your own experience. You said that had you had the education while you were in school about what is appropriate and what isn't, you might have been able to speak out earlier. What was it in your life that finally prompted you to recognize your abuse and to speak out about it?

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Well, I always knew my abuse was wrong. What prompted me is that I had a nervous breakdown after the birth of my daughter. Looking at her, it traumatized me to know that he was still going to be around with my daughter, and it just set off—the years of silence, that you were taught that we're not allowed to speak, the threats of death if you speak—it triggered that to open a flood of "I can't be silent anymore," and I just went from there.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sherry Anderson, this is Daiene again. We applaud your courage for calling in and chatting with this committee. Your information has informed us, and we're very thankful that you did get in touch.

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Well, thank you for hearing me. Like I say, I just hope that there is more funding in the Sudbury area. There are so many of us waiting for help that we just can't get up here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Thank you, and you have a great day. Bye-bye.

Ms. Sherry Anderson: Thank you so much. Bye-bye.
Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes. The Chair recognizes MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you. I have a research question. So thank you very much for the Legal Strategy Coalition on Violence Against Indigenous Women report. It is rather substantial. I was wondering: Is it possible to highlight for the members of the committee which recommendations specifically fall under provincial jurisdiction?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes. Can our researcher please look into that?

Ms. Carrie Hull: Certainly. I just wanted to say that we do have our interim report coming very soon, and it might take more than a week to get through the 700 recommendations.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Better you than me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our Clerk wants us to be reminded that he would like to see all of us who are riding the bus on Monday to be at the Legislature by 3:45, as the bus is leaving promptly at 4 p.m. How many people are on the bus?

Interjection: Going?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Going from Toronto to Windsor. The bus is pulling out at 4 p.m., so please be here at least 15 minutes in advance.

Any more questions from anyone? Laurie, you look like you want to ask a question.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I know. I'm trying to, because I'm watching for an update. I would just ask the committee—I know we don't have any more Toronto meetings being booked for deputations, because we're into report-writing for the interim report, right? So we travel next week—

Interjection.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, for the interim report.

But I was approached, in light of what occurred in the news yesterday with reporter Shauna Hunt from CityNews—had we known there were possibly openings today—we just didn't know ahead of time. I believe she's expressing an interest to appear before committee. Because of the timeliness of it, I didn't know if there would be an exception. Then maybe the two weeks that we are back—I know we're supposed to be report-writing, but just for a short possibility for her to come forward. If we want to do it here or do it in subcommittee or do it next week—I just wanted to put it out there, if it's a possibility.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I would be very supportive. I think it's very timely. I think the reaction in the press yesterday and the tweets and Facebook—I was in the car

for about an hour and a half, and it was the top news story, as well as today.

I think the swiftness of how people reacted to the situation was incredible, and I think it really could inform the committee. I'd be supportive, if she would be happy to come in, and then we'd carry on with the report-writing after her deputation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes. This incident is very timely and very topical.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I think it was.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I believe that we ought to accommodate her. What we can do is, when we are meeting on Wednesday, May 27, we are supposed to meet at 4 p.m. What if we were to meet at 3:30 that day, hear her testimony and then move into report-writing after that? Is everyone agreeable to that?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes. If she's willing to come in, then I agree.

Interjection: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. Committee members, we will see you all next week on the road. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment is now in recess until next Tuesday.

The committee adjourned at 1657.



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Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 19 mai 2015

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel



Chair: Daiene Vernile
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE ET DU HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Tuesday 19 May 2015

Mardi 19 mai 2015

The committee met at 0902 in the Waterfront Hotel Downtown Windsor, Windsor.

STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good morning, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. I'd like to welcome all of the presenters and the guests who are here with us today.

Let me start by stating the mandate of this committee. We're here to listen to your experiences—survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts—on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You are going to inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward and reporting abuses. However, I do want to stress that we do not have the power as a committee to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

I welcome you.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE OF WINDSOR

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would ask that our first presenter come forward. Please make yourself comfortable. You will have 20 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please start by stating the name of your organization and your name.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: My name is Shelley Gilbert. I'm the coordinator of social work services at Legal Assistance of Windsor and the chair of WEFiGHT, which is an anti-human-trafficking initiative here in Windsor and Essex.

I'd like to thank the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment for the invitation to speak with you about our work, and to provide, as a result of our experience in working with survivors of human trafficking, recommendations based on best practice.

A community-based steering committee has existed in Windsor and Essex since 2004, and Legal Assistance of Windsor has acted as the lead organization for WEFiGHT since approximately 2008. As you may know, Legal Assistance of Windsor is a community-based legal clinic which employs lawyers and social workers while

providing internships to law and social work students from the University of Windsor.

As we began working with survivors, we recognized their experiences required integrated support services, recognizing and advocating for both the survivor's legal and psychosocial needs with equal importance. We recognized the horror of their experience would have to be articulated to government bodies such as immigration, law enforcement and the criminal justice system, and that survivors needed strong advocates to stand beside them and ensure their voices were heard. Through joint efforts of law and social work, advocacy and psychosocial supports assist survivors to move through these various systems while developing strategies to heal from their experiences.

As such, we have assisted both internationally and domestically trafficked men, women and children, and have established strong community protocols with our partners to assist in providing basic needs such as accommodations, food, clothing, and crisis and counseling services.

The Canadian idea or perception as to what constitutes human trafficking has slowly evolved over the last 10 years and must continue to do so. As a result of education and a changing perception, our office has had the privilege of working with and supporting women and girls who have experienced abuse, harassment and exploitation in their workplace; were forced to marry and become enslaved at ages as young as 14; and those abused and exploited in the sex trade industry.

Whether internationally or domestically trafficked, these women have common needs: They must be heard and believed; they must have supportive and professional services with the experience and knowledge to advocate effectively; they must be provided the opportunity and the time to heal; and they must have the opportunity to move forward with their lives through work and/or retraining.

According to the RCMP's Human Trafficking Co-ordination Centre's newsletter of February 2015, over the past 10 years there have been 85 completed human-trafficking-specific cases where convictions were secured, and 151 individuals convicted of human-trafficking-specific or human-trafficking-related offenses, such as forcible confinement, sexual assault and living off the avails.

There are currently 143 cases before the courts. As of 2013, over 90% of these involved domestic human trafficking, Canadian girls and men, and only three charges have ever been laid under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Whether we agree that these are too few convictions or not, there are two resulting realities that form the basis of two of our recommendations. Although Canada is a destination country, internationally trafficked women are seriously under-represented in these statistics. The reality is, women with precarious status are afraid to come forward to police due to the potential of being turned over to the Canada Border Services Agency, detained and deported.

Immigration status should have no bearing or effect on contacting local police enforcement. Women in Canada, regardless of immigration status, must know that they can rely on police to protect us. This was not the case for one of our clients at Legal Assistance of Windsor, who was deported by CBSA after calling the police on her trafficker, and it may not be for any of the 11 women recently in Ottawa who were found working in massage parlours in April of this year. We strongly recommend that police services around the province implement a "don't ask, don't tell" type of policy regarding immigration status for all victims of crimes of violence.

The other reality is that although convictions help a victim to feel some level of closure and justice, a conviction is not ongoing, supportive counseling, retraining or case management services. Our second recommendation is that professional services receive ongoing and stable funding and that funding moves from providing education to providing service provision, crisis management and ongoing counselling services.

The elements that I provide here are in plain-language descriptions based on the legislation you saw previously. I'd like to provide some examples of these elements by articulating each in relation to young women that we've worked with. I'm of course using aliases.

Mary was recruited by a friend over Facebook at 16 years old. She was told by a girlfriend that she had met in a group home that the girl's boyfriend's friend liked her pictures and that he wanted to meet her. After texts and phone calls with the young man, she agreed to meet him. For over two months, she was forced to prostitute in cities across our province and service between seven and 10 men a day, seven days a week.

Charlotte wasn't moved to another city, but she was moved from hotel to hotel and apartment to apartment throughout Windsor. Although she was involved with the Children's Aid Society, she was afraid to be left alone on the streets of Windsor and felt that she had no one to help her.

Sarah's trafficker was the father of one of her children, and he kept the child from her with his family in their country of origin. He used this as a means to coerce her into the sex trade industry. If she did what he demanded in the sex trade and she gave him access to her, he would allow her to speak with their daughter on the phone. He kept Sarah hoping and working in the industry through his promise of bringing their child to Canada.

0910

All of these women and others we know were exploited and enslaved. They were forced to work against their will, and their money was taken. They were hurt physically and emotionally, and they continue to live with the effects of their experience today.

Supply and demand factors, such as the feminization of poverty around the world and Canada's demand for cheap labour, have contributed to slave-like conditions for many of the women we've worked with who are experiencing forced labour. Women desperate to feed and care for their children and families risk everything to come to Canada, but many discover, too late, that they have been deceived and are being exploited for their labour. They feel they have nowhere to turn for help. Constant threats of deportation would mean there would be no way to feed their children, or at times emotional and physical violence forces their compliance.

One woman we work with currently was enslaved in several countries, including Canada, for over 15 years. She was paid between \$50 and \$80 a month and worked seven days a week, 12- and 15-hour days. She was physically and emotionally exhausted. She was assaulted by the teenage children she had cared for since they were infants. She was yelled at and threatened by the employers. She had nowhere to turn and had no idea what to do. Charges have never been laid against her employers.

Her experience leads us to the third recommendation: Law enforcement, crown attorneys and immigration officers should receive specific training and education about forced labour practices and how economic intimidation and threats of deportation are often used as means of coercion to exploit people.

Throughout the criminal justice system and the many shelters across the country and province, many women who have been trafficked through marriage are recognized as being victims of domestic violence, and they are. However, further investigation and an understanding of their situation would lead to a recognition of how women are trafficked through marriage.

We have worked with women in hiding who have told us about their brothers hoping to sell them for upwards of \$45,000. We have worked with girls who have been used to pay off family debts and young girls whose families were desperate to feed their other children during times of war. The symptoms of trauma they experience are significant, and in some ways are different from other domestic violence survivors. Their youth, culture and immigration needs all must be considered when providing support and advocacy.

Dedicated education and training must be provided to shelters, to law-enforcement and newcomer-serving agencies as to what constitutes trafficking through marriage, the signs and how to interview potential survivors with a deeper lens. We also recommend that guidance counsellors, social workers in schools, teachers and young people learn about all types of human trafficking, and young women in Canada are provided the support they need to come forward.

Traffickers are preying on women's vulnerabilities in Windsor and Essex and in communities across our country. Poverty, family violence, precarious immigration status and a continued sense of apathy, or at the very least a lack of education about why young women are transitioning into the sex trade, why they are running away from group homes, and where they are running to, allows traffickers or pimps to begin grooming young girls for the game, as it's called, at as young as 13 years of age.

Youth-serving organizations, law enforcement, the criminal justice system and anti-human-trafficking initiatives must begin working together and establish community-based collaboratives and protocols that begin supporting girls at risk, assist them to be found and when they are found, and support them throughout the criminal court and/or immigration process, as well as help them to rebuild their lives.

The list of who these individuals are as traffickers continues to lengthen based on the survivors' accounts of their experiences.

As I said earlier, this is an evolving issue and requires those of us who work with survivors to understand that we are learning about this issue from survivors, from the real experts on this issue. If we recognize this, our understanding of each of the elements of trafficking will continue to change and expand as traffickers use various and different strategies to recruit and force compliance on their victims. The controls used are based on the particular victim they have in front of them and their knowledge of what she cares about.

I spoke about Mary earlier. After escaping from her trafficker, she went back to him because he began threatening to make false allegations about her father to the police. Sarah's trafficker used her need to speak with and keep in contact with her daughter as a form of control. And Charlotte's traffickers used her fear of being on the streets and having no family to turn to.

These changing strategies can be difficult for systems that rely on strict guidelines and policy, that rely on similar facts, or those providers who do not take the time to educate themselves, develop an expertise on the issue and establish a relationship with the survivor. It is our recommendation that police, crown attorneys and service providers commit dedicated resources to the issue of human trafficking and establish the expertise necessary to understand the issue and advocate for survivors.

I'd like to provide a summary of the recommendations and go through each of those, if I may:

(1) Police should encourage all victims to report violence, regardless of their immigration status, by establishing a "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

(2) Stable funding must be established for professional, evidence-based service provision.

(3) Police and crown attorneys should have consistent and dedicated resources with expertise in all areas of human trafficking, including forced labour practices and marriage as trafficking.

(4) Dedicated education and training should be provided to shelters, the education system, newcomer-serving

organizations and youth about trafficking through marriage, including the signs and interview strategies.

(5) Greater collaboration and protocols must be established between youth-serving organizations, law enforcement, the criminal justice system, immigration and CBSA, and anti-human-trafficking initiatives, to begin supporting all women and girls at risk in this country, assisting them to be found and looking for young girls who are running away, supporting them through the criminal courts and/or the immigration process, and helping them to rebuild their lives in Canada if they wish to remain in Canada.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first set of questions for you are from our PC caucus, beginning with MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing here before us today. That's a lot of information.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Yes, it is.

Ms. Laurie Scott: But thank you for the work that you do. On Thursday of last week in the Legislature, I brought forward a motion that asked for a more coordinated approach. I don't know if you're familiar with guns and gangs.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It doesn't have to be exactly the same. What I was trying to say is that it needs to be a coordinated approach across police services, and obviously education is a component.

When you mentioned education—some police services I spoke to said that they're in the elementary schools. Once one of the children gets a cellphone, somehow they get the numbers—take out the vulnerable. When you were talking about education, do you have a sense of what we could be doing? It's delicate in public school. You can't say "human trafficking." Is there any guidance or any experience you've had, or any best practices you know that exist to get the girls early?

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: I think that the education system and group homes are a place where we can make some efforts to talk to young people, both boys and girls, and begin looking at why young people are entering into the sex trade and how the culture and our society now perpetuate some of that activity.

0920

But I think that it's important for young people to hear the realities of the circumstances of the street as well, and of course you do have to do that delicately. We've done a lot of work in high schools, specifically, and in Catholic high schools as well. The young people that we've spoken with have appreciated some of the realities of young people's circumstances on the street. And so I have spoken about the young people, the 16-year-old girls that we've worked with—with their permission, of course—to tell a little bit of their stories.

But I think that we also really have to look at the causes of why young people are moving in that direction, begin looking at that specifically, and not blowing those young people off as troublemakers, blowing it off as just chronic runaways, but really beginning to look at and

change our practices to really begin recognizing why this is happening, in order to stop this from happening in any respect.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I have limited time, so I'll be very quick.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Be very quick.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Which one will I pick? Okay. The organizations that help with employment—I spoke about the fact that a typical shelter is not the spot for these individuals. You might have some areas that you have or maybe you have something in Windsor that's very specific. But the length of time of healing can be very long. We've heard about post-traumatic syndrome. Do you have anybody who does work with employment? We have to get them back into the work world normally, as opposed to going back to their pimps. Do you have a short comment that you could make on this? It's limited time, so—

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Yes. I mean, financial needs are immediate, and so typically what we've done is that we've developed a protocol with the city of Windsor social services, because initially somebody is probably going to need some assistance. Being able to go from 10 or 15 years or five years under the complete control of a pimp means that they're going to need some opportunity to heal, to do some work, to deal with their physical needs, to deal with their emotional needs, and then begin moving into the workforce or into retraining at that point.

So we have attempted to develop some relationships with retraining services here in Windsor, but it's really based on the assessment of the woman that we're working with and where she wants to go, and whether she's dealing with any other ongoing issues such as addiction, severe PTSD etc. that will lead to where she's going to go after this. But everyone that we've worked with has wanted that as one of their goals, to get into the workforce at some point, and they need the ongoing case management, even when they're in school or retraining, to be able to stay there and deal with crises as they come forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Shelley, for the work that you do, and thanks for presenting here.

I'm looking for precedents. You gave us some great recommendations here. Where do you see a similar "don't ask, don't tell" program as it relates to immigration status and vulnerable women, or men or boys, if that is also a demographic?

You referenced CAS using hotels as temporary refuges or shelters. We know Manitoba is experiencing problems in that. What's the prevalence of that and where have they looked at using other areas where the resource is required?

The consistent, dedicated resources within police and crown attorneys' offices and expertise in all areas of human trafficking: Are the RCMP currently doing that? Where do we find a specialized group dedicated to doing that, and what have the results been in focusing specifically on human trafficking?

Another question to you: You referenced employers under the context of forced labour. Are these traditional employers, legal, recognized employers?

Okay. And if you could give me an example of that in Ontario, where we're seeing high incidences of forced labour.

I think that's going to take up the bulk of my questions, Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You've pretty much taken up all your time.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thanks, Shelley. It's a rapid-fire. Go ahead. Thank you.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Okay. There are some examples of a "don't ask, don't tell" policy. I'm not going to suggest that any of them are perfect at this point. I think it's something for us to consider and to review. In fact, it's one of the things that I have resources looking at now. Toronto, for instance, has a "don't ask, don't tell" type of policy. I've asked students and researchers from the University of Windsor to do a literature review on that topic as well so that we can see what is working and what is not, around "don't ask, don't tell." I think it can be done and it is being done in different circumstances.

I'm sorry; I don't think I discussed children's aid putting children in hotels, although we know that that happens at times here in Windsor, as it does across the province. But certainly the young people whom we've worked with who have been 16, 17 or 18 years of age have all had children's aid involvement, and so we do have to look at that system. They have been considered chronic runaway girls and kids out of group homes, and the young women whom we've worked with were recruited by other girls they met in group homes. So we do have to look at that system, I think, and look at the resources that are available, specifically to these young women transitioning into the industry or at risk of transitioning into the industry.

We've recently established a very strong relationship with the children's aid society locally and are beginning to look at those issues. How do we find the girls when they're running? We know that they're running up and down the 401 and we know that somebody is running them up and down the 401, so we need to find them when they're gone.

Dedicated resources—I'm sorry; you need to tell me again.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: For police or crown attorneys' offices.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Unfortunately, the RCMP has been very, very focused on national security issues. Although they attempt to put resources into this, we're really looking at local police departments. Some police departments across the province have had—Peel, for instance, and York—the highest incidence of convictions as well because they have had dedicated officers who have remained in that department over a period of time. They've established intelligence; they've established relationships with people on the street. As a result, they are able to find vulnerable and missing girls.

Other police departments—Windsor, for instance—have not been able to do that and have not dedicated their resources to that as well. As a result, the officers are doing the best that they can, but often those officers are moving and therefore missing the ongoing intelligence and relationships necessary for a woman to say, “It’s not me, but I’m worried about this girl several rooms down,” from that hotel.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi, Shelley.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Hello.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Good to see you.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Nice to see you.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It has been a long time.

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Yes, it has.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I feel old; I don’t know about you. Great presentation. Very informative. My colleagues have done a great job in unpacking some of the pieces so far. What I wanted to talk to you about—you said something I found extremely compelling; well, it was all compelling. It feels a lot like “listen,” “believe” and “validate” are so important to this conversation. The tough-love remedy, which might work in some instances—I’ve heard of young people having doors locked as young as grades 7, 8 and 9, and I’m not sure that that’s an effective tool, is it?

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: I would agree.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I would love to have you expand on that domestic human trafficking piece.

Also: “Conviction doesn’t equal counselling”: I wrote it down in my notes. It was a rough translation of what you said. Could you talk about that a little bit? We’ve heard a lot in this committee about the barriers to reporting and coming forward, and while convictions are an outcome of increased reporting—not always; we need to fix that, I guess. We need to do some work in that area. We’re hearing that. Counselling and related services remain important, and sometimes there’s a competition between the two of those things. Maybe that’s the wrong word; I apologize. But do you know what I mean?

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Yes.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Can you help us unpack what that might look like in a perfect world, realizing that the world isn’t perfect?

Ms. Shelley Gilbert: Yes. I think one of the main things that has worked for us is the ability, through WEFIGHT and Legal Assistance of Windsor, to maintain an ongoing relationship for three years with the survivor. We know that the literature and certainly our experience suggest that it’s at least three years of rather intensive case management and support services that people need to be able to come out of the other side of this. We know that it takes upwards of two years at times to even get through the criminal court process. So having consistent and dedicated support services for her through each of the systems that she’s moving through allows us to help ensure that she’s not going back to the pimp; that if he’s

calling her, for instance, we can try and counteract that; to deal with the effects, the emotional effects, and even the emotional effects of going through the criminal court process or going through the immigration process.

Of course, this brings all of those symptoms back underneath the skin, I’d say. And so all of the symptoms that they have buried down start coming back up and then we see tripping and then we see falling back. So it’s very important that we’re able to stay involved and that those people who have established some level of trust are the ones who are able to remain throughout the process.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for appearing before this committee today. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience.

UNIFOR

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenters to come forward. They are with Unifor.

Please have a seat and make yourselves comfortable. You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. Begin by stating your names, and start anytime.

0930

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: My name is Tracey Ramsey.

Ms. Manon Pageau-Lane: Manon Pageau-Lane.

Ms. Christine Maclin: Christine Maclin.

Ms. Manon Pageau-Lane: Unifor welcomes the opportunity to provide its views to the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment.

I am Manon Pageau-Lane. I work for the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board, with Unifor Local 2458. Our union represents 305,000 members from coast to coast to coast, with 52% of those members living in Ontario. Over 87,000 of our members are women. Our members work in a variety of occupations within nearly every sector of the economy. We work in hospitals, manufacturing, clerical, custodial, retail, education, mining, fishing and forestry. We are pilots, auto workers, nurses, heavy-equipment operators, secretaries and child care workers. Our members are young people, aboriginal people, visible minorities, LGTBQ, seniors and people with disabilities.

Despite the work that has been done over many decades, sexual violence and harassment remain a reality in our lives. A recent Canadian study revealed that one third of women have experienced intimate-partner violence. Our union has been part of an ongoing effort to reduce gender-based violence in our society and, in particular, in our workplace.

We are pleased that the Ontario government’s action plan, released in March of this year, provides concrete measures in a variety of areas to help change attitudes, provide more supports for survivors, and make workplaces and campuses safer and more responsive to complaints about sexual violence and harassment.

We will be focusing our submission on the workplace, but we know that violence and harassment doesn’t start at the workplace door and even end when the perpetrator

walks out. The breadth of the action plan is a positive approach. It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment proposes strengthening the Occupational Health and Safety Act and creating a new code of practice for employers, establishing a special enforcement team of inspectors and the development of educational materials to help create a safer workplace.

While we welcome this attempt to create real tools, we wonder why this will be different from measures and legislative changes in the past. The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits sexual harassment already. We've bargained anti-harassment language in our collective agreements. This language, along with a joint investigation process, has worked to reduce harassment and violence in the workplace, but it still persists at an unacceptable level.

Our union has advocated on its own and as part of coalitions formed after the workplace murders of Theresa Vince in 1996 and Lori Dupont in 2005 to bring in changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the OHSA. This advocacy resulted in Bill 168, which has been in force since June 2010. But still, sexual harassment and violence exists in the workplace. The coroner's jury recommendations in the inquest into each of these workplace murders outlined many useful steps but still have been largely ignored.

The introduction of additional changes to the OHSA will close some of the loopholes that employers have discovered since the act was amended in 2010. The most glaring of those is the lack of enforcement power of inspectors. As long as an employer can show that they have a policy, the inspector looks no further—it doesn't matter how ineffective the policy is. Workers should call the ministry to file a complaint if it is not being dealt with internally by the employer. Unfortunately, inspectors will only review the workplace policy and procedures, and issue an order only if they are already on-site on another matter. In order to have inspectors able to assess the policy and enforce the proposed changes to the legislation, specialized training will be needed. There must also be an adequate number of inspectors. There is a shortage of health and safety inspectors across the board. We need to ensure that there is an increase in inspectors for all health and safety matters.

Bill 168 clarified that workplace harassment is a hazard covered by the OHSA. However, the new law did not explicitly require employers to take reasonable precautions to control that hazard. Unfortunately, the inspectorate's involvement has been limited to solely checking whether or not the employer has a policy on violence and harassment. No clear rights to protect workers from violence or harassment were created. The new section, 32.0.5(1), reads: "For greater certainty, the employer duties set out in section 25, the supervisor duties set out in section 27, and the worker duties set out in section 28 apply, as appropriate, with respect to workplace violence." Yet enforcement is weak. We see the Ministry of Labour focus their efforts on the employer's management of the problem rather than protecting the victims.

We encourage the government to consider a broader regulatory framework to address the quality of workplace policies and programs. Currently, there are no opportunities for inspectors to judge the quality of the program, implementation and competency of the investigation and adoption of recommendations. The inspectorate must have the ability to ensure that workplace harassment and violence complaints are effectively dealt with by the workplace parties, with an emphasis on ensuring that a resolve is obtained and that hazards are addressed.

In addition, regulations must enable the inspectorate to order the employer to engage qualified investigators to examine the details and deliver recommendations that are enforceable when an employer does not voluntarily and fundamentally comply.

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: My name is Tracey Ramsey and my workplace is Ford Motor Co. I am from Local 200 with Unifor.

We also encourage the government to expand section 52 to include all incidents of violence, regardless of whether they result in physical injury. Currently, the reporting requirements of section 52 do not include many serious incidents of violence which have a profound effect on workers, for example, a worker threatened with a weapon but not physically injured, or a worker restrained by an assailant with sexual misconduct in mind. The law must place obligations on the employer to examine the workplace practices to prevent reoccurrences.

Focus must also be on prevention, not just on complaint-based reaction to sexual harassment and violence in the workplace.

We know that sexual harassment is a continuum. We press the employer to address what is seen as lower-level sexual harassment, for example, the use of gendered, disrespectful language; an example of that is "bitch." When there is a clear message that sexual harassment is not going to be tolerated, incidents are reduced. The union has worked really hard to ensure employers are living up to their obligations in this area.

In addition, no worker is safe if he or she is not protected from discipline when trying to protect their health and safety. Protection from reprisal should be a critical role for the inspectorate, especially when dealing with harassment in the workplace. We expect the law to protect workers from reprisals by investigating their complaints, making orders against employers and by prosecuting those employers who fail to comply.

Language: "domestic violence" versus "intimate-partner violence." We know that the best way to find solutions to a problem is to accurately name the problem. The labour movement pushed for the inclusion of violence and harassment prevention measures in the OHSA. In particular, we pushed for the inclusion of obligations on employers around domestic violence. We are now asking for an update in language. Changing the term to "intimate-partner violence" more accurately reflects this particular experience.

In our experience, our members work in a range of occupations in a range of work settings. While sexual

harassment and sexual violence are experienced across the board, there are some particular challenges in some sectors. In many of our manufacturing workplaces, there is a conflict within the workplace. This is understandable, given the stresses of lean production methods and the economic insecurity that is widespread amongst most of our workplaces. This conflict can escalate to harassment when not handled early and handled well.

We are still seeing a lack of understanding around stalking: persistent, unwanted attention at the end of a consensual relationship, causing a person, or anyone known to the person, to fear for their safety by co-workers—under section 265 of the Criminal Code.

0940

There hasn't been enough of a cultural shift on this. For the most part, this stalking behaviour is not recognized as domestic violence because often the two people are not even in nor have ever been in a relationship. Often, he is the "creepy" guy who develops an obsession. Theresa Vince's case involved an obsessed manager.

In our Women's Advocate program that we're going to discuss further, we show a brief film based on a true story. It shows a male co-worker stalking a married woman who has spurned his advances and gifts. He begins with character assassination in the workplace, then phoning her home and hanging up, then leaving a lily on her vehicle, then finally, flattening her tires in the parking lot. After watching the film, we ask our women's advocates how many think they will be dealing with a similar situation. All of them raise their hands. It is our experience that this is very rarely seen as sexual harassment. It is clearly a gender-based action and should be seen within the category of sexual harassment. We recommend that stalking should be specifically covered under the Occupational Health and Safety Act amendments.

Ms. Christine Maclin: I'm Christine Maclin. I work for Chrysler security. I am a women's advocate and equity rep.

Our promising practices: We are pleased to share some of our promising practices with you, the committee. Our first practice is our Women's Advocate program. We have negotiated women's advocate positions in over 300 of our workplaces, and this is continually growing. A women's advocate is a specially trained workplace representative who assists women with concerns such as workplace harassment, intimate violence and abuse. The women's advocate is not a counsellor, but rather provides support for women accessing community and workplace resources. These specially trained, easy-to-contact workplace representatives have been instrumental in creating healthier workplaces and safer communities. We work closely with management, ensuring strong co-operation to achieve this goal. One of the best tools the union has to prevent violence against women and workplace harassment is our Women's Advocate program.

Violence against women collective agreement language—this is our second practice. The Canadian research report *Can Work Be Safe, When Home Isn't?*

confirmed that intimate-partner violence has an impact on the workplace. The study showed that of those who reported DV experience, 38% indicated it impacted their ability to get to work, including being late, missing work or both. In total, 8.5% of DV victims indicated that they had lost their job because of this. Over half, 53.5%, of those reporting DV experiences indicated that at least one type of abusive act occurred at or near their workplace. Of these, the most common were abusive phone calls or text messages, 40.6%, and stalking or harassment near the workplace, 20.5%.

Recognizing that we have negotiated language in our collective agreements that recognizes that women in abusive situations in their personal lives may also have attendance issues at work, the employer commits to taking these issues into consideration before subjecting these women to discipline for absenteeism.

Our women's advocates play a tremendous role in intervening, even where there isn't collective agreement language. Advocates are able to work with the employer and the worker to ensure safety plans are in place and to ensure that the worker's job is secure while she is able to get assistance in leaving violent relationships.

Our next is our joint investigation process. There are two main areas where employer-only investigations fail: first, in the area of objective and trustworthy investigations. Too often, when the employer conducts their own investigation, they become somewhat self-serving in the protection of their own interests. The second area of shortcoming is penalty. With a joint investigation, the union plays a role in investigating and a separate role for assessment of penalty. Even when there is a valid finding of sexual harassment, the employer's choice of penalty may either be too lenient or too strict. This leads to an undermining of the investigation.

Where there is a joint investigation process for allegations of sexual harassment, there is an increased chance of a positive outcome. We have model language on joint investigations that we bargain with their employers that include training for our investigators and a thorough process for investigation. We produce a reference book for our workplace representatives as well that has step-to-step processes with investigations. We find that trust in the process increases the successful outcomes of investigations. No allegation can be seen in isolation. The allegations take place within the workplace context, and the outcome lives on in the workplace. The joint process decreases backlash against the complainant and can more often lead to positive, systemic resolves.

Our next step: prevention. The committee must make sure that their focus is on the area of prevention of sexual harassment and violence.

Education is vitally important to raising the understanding and analysis of sexual violence and harassment. Unifor pushes for anti-harassment education in the workplace that is facilitated by trained peer educators. We have negotiated employment equity representatives in many of our workplaces who play a positive role for shifting workplace cultures towards respect, including

writing articles in the workplace and union newsletters dealing with anything around prohibited grounds.

Ms. Manon Pageau-Lane: We are encouraged that the government recognizes that we need a broad approach to significant societal issues like sexual violence and harassment. We want to contribute to a constructive process to ensure this plan's success. We believe that some of the steps towards success are contained in this submission. We also believe that in order to be successful the plan must include female workers and labour experts amongst the stakeholders to ensure that real and measurable changes take place.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. Thank you for such a comprehensive presentation and some very helpful specific recommendations.

In the original discussion around Bill 168, were some of these issues brought forward that you have identified in this submission and considered by government and then dismissed, or do you know any of the history around the actual language in the Occupational Health and Safety Act amendments that were introduced with Bill 168?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: To be honest, we weren't specifically part of that process, but our union was part of advocating with the groups that were there, along with Theresa Vince's family and the other families that were involved. So for the three of us to speak on that, we wouldn't know specifically what Unifor asked for in Bill 168, but we could certainly get an answer and bring that back to you.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. The other question: You talked about the joint investigation process. Currently, in Bill 168, it's an employer-led process?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Yes.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So the differences within Unifor workplaces: Your collective agreement mandates a joint process?

Ms. Christine Maclin: Yes. The joint process is actually collectively done with management and union. In our collective agreements we negotiate that both company and union are doing this investigation, and both receive training at the same time.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: But workplaces that don't have that language in their collective agreement are covered only by Bill 168. In those cases, is it strictly an employer-only investigation?

Ms. Christine Maclin: Unifor members are entitled to call national and local, and the local can set up—even though it may not be in their collective agreement, most employers agree that it is good business to include the union in the process to ensure fairness—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes. I'm thinking of non-union workplaces.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, and thank you for the in-depth presentation.

You mentioned that prevention is a very important part of stopping this culture of sexual harassment and violence. I wonder, in your mind, what are some of the root causes of workplace harassment, and if you can tell us a bit more about that. Also, you mentioned that government is going in the right direction with its action plan. Is there anything specific that you want to see expanded or that you think is really working within that action plan that this committee should be paying more attention to?

0950

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: I'll speak to the root causes. We represent many different sectors. We're not speaking today about service sector or health care workers, but they certainly are members of our union, and that will be part of the presentation that you'll hear from our members when they head to Kitchener–Waterloo.

But when we talk about the root cause, it can be that we're dealing with the public. So if our workplace involves clients, patients, any type of service to the public—we have a casino down the road that's staffed by Unifor members. We certainly know that workplace violence and workplace harassment are issues inside of the casino, just simply based on the nature of the work that people do there.

I mentioned that in manufacturing, we are under tremendous pressure, under lean production. There has been obviously a severe reduction in the amount of manufacturing jobs inside of Windsor. We're sitting in a city that has the highest unemployment rate in the country right now. That creates tremendous stress. So when we go to the root causes of why violence is leaking into the workplace, all of these things become part of the factor. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, it seems to find its way into our work.

We're here today to say that we would like to have some stricter measures and some changes to some of the language, so that we can protect ourselves when inside the workplace.

Mr. Han Dong: Good.

Ms. Christine Maclin: We're also taking a look at past history, where people have been taught this from when they were little and trying to challenge that. Like my sister said, when you have heightened unemployment, you have heightened stress within families, and this comes to the workplace because people are struggling to survive. We're trying to go against the grain of what people have been taught. So education is a key. Education comes, as we heard prior, from elementary schools to high schools, and addressing it as early as possible because elementary students are seeing this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Bailey.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you for your presentation today. I wanted to know a little bit more about the Women's Advocate program and if that's something that you see expanding, obviously, through Unifor. Would you recommend that for the rest of the workplaces, and how long has that been in effect?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: I would say that, curiously enough, we have just presented this to the United Nations—I believe the status of women caucus—and there is an adoption process that's going on internationally. So this program is something that's being recognized across the world, and it's something that other unions are looking to adopt, as well as other workplaces, to offer protection for women inside the workplace.

As far as the implementation, that's a good question. I'm not sure of the year. It's been around as long as I've been around. I've been at Ford for 19 years, and I believe the women's advocate position has been in place. I think Manon highlighted that we have women's advocates in a great number of our workplaces but certainly not all of the workplaces that Unifor has either. We're working on that internally, but we do know that the Women's Advocate program has been life-saving and life-changing for our members.

Ms. Christine Maclin: I would definitely recommend it for all workplaces. A women's advocate addresses violence against women, but the women's advocate can also be a resource for a number of our brothers and families who don't feel comfortable necessarily going to speak to management or other union representatives. It is a strictly confidential meeting and it's a resource. To me, there's nothing wrong with giving people resources to help them with their day-to-day life.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes. MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Do we have time?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We do.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing before us. You mentioned stalking. Some bigger companies, of course, will have security in parking lots; you mentioned a couple of cases. How does that work? It's a domestic issue that you're usually being stalked, right? The boyfriend or the—

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: No.

Ms. Laurie Scott: No; not necessarily?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: No.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. So just tell me how that would work in the workplace—if you could expand a little bit further on the stalking issue?

Ms. Tracey Ramsey: Sure. When you work with people for a number of years, I think you become friends inside the workplace. You develop friendships and sometimes that's misconstrued. It's not that it stems from a previous relationship or any type of relationship with that person. It may just be that that person, for whatever reason, feels that you have an interest in them, and so they begin to pursue that in a way that when you say, "Please stop," it continues on. So inside of our workplaces, we see this kind of happening all of the time. It's not something that's brought from the outside in; it's actually something that happens from inside our workplace.

The other thing is that our workplaces, because we've lost so much—I can tell you that I work at the Essex engine plant; three quarters of that plant is dark currently.

Often my job requires me to walk through sections that are darkened. We do have a security protocol where I can call security—and I'm sure Christine will speak to this because she works security at Chrysler—so internally we've created processes for safety, but understand that these are large, large, large buildings that have many corners and have many dark places within them. They can become a dangerous place for women to be at work in.

Ms. Christine Maclin: As security, the main focus is respect and dignity for everyone. With sexual harassment—we deal with it immediately. We have a 3-911 number directly to our security and/or our members have the ability to go to their women's advocate and speak so that we can set up safety plans. But we also address the behaviour with the person that's also involved, letting them know the severity of it that could lead to termination, because in many cases—and what we said in our report—we don't want to go to the extent that every situation is labelled the same. We can also address behaviour and make it stop, and treat everyone with dignity and respect. So there is a process, and it happens immediately.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, thank you very much for coming and appearing before this committee and sharing your information. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now to listen to our next presenter.

DR. CHARLENE SENN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call Charlene Senn to come forward.

Charlene, please have a seat and make yourself comfortable. You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee. That will be followed by questions for you. Please begin by stating your name and your organization, and begin any time.

Dr. Charlene Senn: Thank you very much for this opportunity. My name is Dr. Charlene Senn. I'm a social psychologist, a researcher and full professor within the departments of psychology and women's and gender studies at the University of Windsor.

My field is violence against women and girls. For the past 10 years, my work has focused entirely on the prevention of sexual violence on university campuses. So in this way, I am an expert on sexual violence prevention generally and on bystander and sexual assault resistance education interventions in particular.

Sexualized violence is a deeply gendered issue and cannot be dealt with effectively using a gender-neutral framework. I care deeply about and want to combat all sexual violence, including sexual violence against men and transgender individuals. The vast majority of the perpetrators of sexualized violence—98%—are male, no matter who is being targeted. For this reason, I will use male pronouns for perpetrators and female pronouns for victims/survivors.

Prevention of sexual violence needs to start happening as early as we can possibly start to do it. It can start in

developmentally appropriate ways with very young children. I'm speaking to you today about university campus prevention because it is my primary focus. Campus efforts can have an impact, but please know that I'm not suggesting that this is where prevention should start. It needs to start much earlier.

I'll begin and end with some key messages about prevention of sexual violence that I hope you will take back to your deliberations and find useful in the construction of your report. I'll give you an overview of best practices in prevention and I'll contrast this with the things we know don't work. I will describe two kinds of campus prevention that have been found to be effective in research, both of which I've used at Windsor, and sum up with what I think the challenges for the province will be to work towards the prevention of sexual violence on campus.

The rates of sexual violence committed by men against young women who are students in our colleges and universities have been known since 1985 and remain unacceptably high. There are absolutely no quick fixes. We need to change attitudes and teach skills so that stopping sexual violence becomes everyone's business. We need to give women the tools they need to fight back. We need to hold men who commit sexual violence accountable, and, of course, to support victims and survivors. The latter two actions will be addressed by many of the people presenting to you, I'm sure, so I'll talk about the former two.

You should know that most attempts at prevention have been ineffective. We need to stop doing things that there is clear evidence don't work and start focusing on doing high-quality, effective prevention. Prevention can't be done quickly or without expertise. It can be done efficiently and reasonably. It does require dedicated funds.

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What do we know? A truism of all prevention, not just sexual violence prevention, is that providing people with knowledge does not automatically or inevitably lead to changes in behaviour. In fact, we know that knowledge is not, by itself, prevention. To change people's behaviour, we also need to increase their perception that change is necessary and desirable, increase their readiness and willingness to change, provide them with specific skills in the relevant domains and increase their confidence that they could employ these skills or behaviours at the times and places that they are necessary. Then, changes in behaviour can come about. This can't happen in a 30- or 60-minute session of any kind of presentation, workshop, theatre piece or film. It sometimes starts to happen in 90 minutes or three hours of a well-designed intervention. But if we want the attitudes and behaviours to last, longer interventions with more interactions and more practice is what is needed.

So any time someone says that they can prevent a complex phenomenon like sexual violence with a quick and brief solution, you'll know that it isn't possible. It can't happen from reading a poster, listening to a public service announcement or watching one on television or

the Internet. These can act as boosters; that is, they can remind people about what they learned in that in-depth prevention workshop they took, and they can start people thinking and open up conversations. This is good, but this is not prevention on its own.

Real prevention takes time, resources and expertise. Many of the best practices for sexual violence prevention are not common knowledge or even common sense. In fact, many homegrown sexual violence education efforts fly directly in the face of everything we know. They're destined to fail, but we keep doing them on campuses all over North America. I'll outline some key areas of best practice and some things to watch out for.

Inclusivity is a very important social principle. We can do high-quality sexual violence prevention within an inclusive framework, but two best practices are important considerations for how inclusion should be practised. First, using gender-neutral language in prevention is not recommended, as it masks the realities of the phenomena. There are ways to ensure that participants in prevention understand that sexual violence is also experienced by transgender individuals at higher rates than for women and men, but at lower rates than for women, and that women can occasionally be perpetrators. We can also communicate that all sexual violence must be ended for full equality and justice in our society, but sexual violence prevention cannot be accomplished by insisting on gender-neutral language.

Second, best practice is that sexual violence prevention should be done, whenever possible, in single-sex groups. Effectiveness with men is maximized by having male-only groups, even when the content being received is the same as women are receiving. Transgender individuals are welcomed within whichever group they feel most comfortable. The rationale for single-sex groups is presented when asked about. Mixed-sex groups might seem like a good idea, but the research is clear that they are entirely ineffective or are less effective for male participants than male-only groups. This does not mean that interventions cannot model men and women working together to combat sexual violence. This can be accomplished in other ways.

Another best practice in prevention education is small groups. There are no effective campus prevention interventions done entirely in large groups. Large lectures or performances seem cost-efficient, but they aren't, because they aren't effective prevention. They can't go beyond knowledge and slight attitude shifts. Again, large venues might be a good way to start a conversation, but prevention has not been accomplished.

The use of expertise is always a best practice, and it's important for successful prevention. Often, university education on sexual violence is driven by students, as you've probably seen, or participatory in some way. This can be very important for student buy-in and for forcing universities to do something, but passion and energy are not all that is needed for effective prevention. The use of interventions that have demonstrated effectiveness—that is, that have been tested in research against control groups—is the only way to know that you have a good

base to begin. Working with local experts and the originators of those programs on adaptations to make sure those interventions speak to the local community helps to make the material personally relevant.

Sustainability is important and, while often not mentioned in summaries of best practice, should be, in my opinion. Even effective prevention efforts fail when they're only continued for a year or two, because students graduate or staff leave or lose energy, or when short-term funding ends. When prevention is not built into the workings of an institution and base or reliable funding is not provided so that it's sustained, maintained and improved each year, we cannot be successful.

Malcolm Gladwell's concept of the tipping point—you might be familiar with this—is important to keep in mind. Basically this idea is that we don't need to get high-quality prevention to every single person within a university or organization or society to make change; we actually need to get the attitudinal and behavioural changes to just a critical proportion of the people—sometimes that proportion is as low as 10%. Then we need to sustain it so that there's renewal, and over time the change spreads out from those people to their social circles and beyond, and we experience a community-level shift.

We haven't seen this kind of shift yet in sexual violence prevention, but we can get on the right path and persist until we do. This is what we're doing at the University of Windsor, and I will move to talking about it shortly.

First, I need to clarify what we mean when we say a program or workshop is "effective," and what we know about what actually works. There are three types of interventions that have been studied, and I'll talk about each very briefly. They're summarized in the brief one-page summary by Lonsway and colleagues that I've given you. You can get the whole article, if you want, from the URL at the top.

When people say that their prevention efforts are "effective," it's important to ask, "On what outcome?" Quite a few sexual violence prevention interventions are in some ways effective, but only in improving knowledge about rape or making small changes in attitudes, for example, reducing belief in rape myths for a very short period of time. So most studies are only showing changes in knowledge and attitudes and not in behaviour of any kind. Again, this is opening conversations; it's not preventing sexual violence.

So the first type of prevention that has been studied are programs targeting men's perpetration. These can only be deemed truly effective if they actually reduce sexual assault behaviour. Most education efforts do not even measure this and so there is absolutely no evidence that they work.

In fact, researchers at the Centers for Disease Control in the US have recently conducted a comprehensive, systematic review of 30 years of research—I've given you the tables from that study that summarize their findings. It shows that only one program has ever

reduced sexual violence perpetration—it's called Safe Dates—with a lasting effect, and it targets students in grades 8 and 9. None of the programs targeting men in university are effective when they've been tested in well-conducted studies or replicated, and some actually have backlash effects, which means that it actually increases sexual violence. So this type of prevention should likely not be undertaken on campuses by anyone without extensive expertise, and maybe not even then.

The second type of prevention is self-defence and sexual assault resistance education for women, sometimes also called "risk reduction," though I don't prefer that. In order for it to be effective, it must measure victimization. This type of prevention is based on the research finding that women who fight back verbally and physically against men who sexually assault them are more likely to avoid completed rape than women who do not. The sad reality is that women are least likely to use effective methods of self-defence against men they know, and so you know how high the rates of acquaintance rape are. So, without training and education, most women are not able to resist attacks by acquaintances effectively. But training and technique are not enough because there are many barriers to women resisting men they know. Most of these go beyond knowledge and skills; they're cognitive and emotional barriers.

If you think for a minute about the terrifying situation of a young woman facing a man who she knew and trusted who is now not listening to her, persisting on touching her sexually when she asked him not to, holding her down and saying things that she can't believe that he would think, there is not much about the mainstream defensive strategies women are taught—"Stick your keys in his eyes," or "Stomp on his instep"—that is going to help a woman process what is happening and get out safely. There have been several programs for women that have been promising but none have been able to deliver reductions in victimization for more than two months or for all women.

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Over the past 10 years, I have developed and have been evaluating a 12-hour sexual assault resistance education program for women in their first year of university. The results of this CIHR-funded study that I conducted with almost 900 women at three universities will be published next month. It shows the effectiveness of this new program in a rigorous randomized control trial. I'll send the committee the findings when they are no longer embargoed, on June 11. But in a nutshell, the program accomplishes all that it set out to. It helps women more realistically assess the risk to them of men they know, detect danger more quickly, know what the most effective self-defence strategies are and be willing to use them, have the confidence that they could defend themselves if the need arises and reduce the severity of victimization they experience, all for at least 12 months.

Self-defence programs focused on stranger sexual assaults, such as RAD and the police-led ones often offered on university campuses, have not been shown to

be effective, probably because they are not designed to help women fight back against men they know.

A recent study by Dr. Jocelyn Hollander at the University of Oregon has shown that a 10-week intensive feminist self-defence program can be effective. Wen-Do Women's Self Defence in Canada is probably the most comparable to this type of self-defence training, but it's not been formally evaluated.

The third type of prevention is bystander-type education. It can be effective by changing both attitudes and bystander behaviour for men and women.

Research is clear that in situations where social norms overtly or covertly support sexual violence—for example, masculinized peer groups like fraternities and sports teams—in those areas rates of rape are higher than in the general campus community. Similarly, some research has suggested that if we were to create a community social norm of anti-sexism and respect for women's sexual rights, lower rape rates would result.

Bystander interventions try to create a community of student citizens who are empowered to safely intervene in three different kinds of situations: situations that support sexual assault, like someone telling a rape joke; situations where the risk of sexual violence is elevated or even likely, for example, a sober man is seen taking a woman who can barely walk upstairs at a party; and situations where support is needed, for example, a friend tells you she was sexually assaulted last night.

What we need to influence in bystander workshops are attitudes that support the need for intervention on sexual violence; confidence that something can be done, and that the students have the skills to do it; and the intention to take action and actually intervene. All of these are important. The pro-social-bystander behaviour that results from all of those other aspects is the critical outcome to establish effectiveness.

But I want to note that using an effective bystander workshop is not actually preventing sexual violence immediately. It's a long-term strategy where it's expected that the community would become safer through the people around the perpetrator refusing to tolerate their behaviour, intervening when they see elevated risk for sexual violence and supporting survivors.

I'm going to provide you with just a little bit more information about our University of Windsor initiative because I believe it's a model of a sustainable, long-term strategy for preventing sexual violence. Dr. Anne Forrest has been my partner in this initiative since the beginning. Dr. Dusty Johnstone joined our team, and is the person who teaches all of our courses and organizes and supervises all of the workshops.

We use the Bringing in the Bystander program, which was developed at the University of New Hampshire. We adapted it into a three-hour Canadian version. Our novel addition has been to do what we call "institutionalizing" it. We train the peer-student facilitators and we have the workshops all in academic courses. In this way, our initiative is sustainable over time.

Our university administration supports us financially through our president's Strategic Priority Fund, along

with annual contributions from the deans of three faculties. I want to be clear that this is base funding. We started small but now have a full-time teaching faculty person, a steady and new stream of student-peer facilitators each year, and a flow of students through the workshops as part of their regular academic activities in business, criminology and psychology courses. This year, we also began training law students as facilitators and offering the workshops to all entering law students during orientation. In 2014-15, the Bringing in the Bystander workshop was made available to over 1,300 students on our campus. These workshops were facilitated by more than 40 other students working in pairs.

We conducted an evaluation over two years and found that the workshops offered this way were effective, and we are nearing the tipping point and expect to be able to see campus-level changes in student attitudes and behaviours over the next five to 10 years.

We've been excited by the media interest in our work and the many calls we get from other universities for more information. But while there is always great enthusiasm and deep caring, very few of these universities have designated funding or the people to devote more than a small proportion of their overall time to these efforts.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Dr. Senn, you have one minute remaining.

Dr. Charlene Senn: Yes. With cuts in education funding, few universities will have had the foresight or capacity to designate sexual violence prevention efforts. The earlier Sexual Violence Action Plan and the latest report on sexual violence from the provincial government make it clear that universities must do prevention—as they should—but of all the promises from government about funding, there is no prevention allocation for universities and colleges that I was able to find. Without this, it's extremely unlikely that the province will get the outcomes they hope for.

I want to just end where I began and say there are no quick fixes. We need to stop doing things for which there's clear evidence that they don't work and start focusing on high-quality, effective prevention. It can't be done easily or quickly, without expertise. It can be done efficiently and reasonably, and it does require dedicated funds.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Dr. Senn, thank you for your work at the university. It feels like you're building communities of practice. It feels like this is a best practice model for other universities, so I'm heartened to hear that other campuses—as I was taking notes, I was thinking of McMaster, which is a campus right next door to my community that I do a lot of work with.

A couple of compelling things that you said: no quick fixes; it's everybody's business.

The health and physical education curriculum changes that we announced, which talk a lot about consent,

permission and boundaries at an early age: While we've had very positive feedback on the institution of those changes to the curriculum and that announcement and its positive outcomes, one of the things that has been shocking is to see it still happening on campuses, because these are things that, in point of fact, we've been teaching in grade school for a long time. While the new changes are to keep up to speed with technology and some of the shocking things that are present that might not have been so much so 10, 15 or 20 years ago, we've been teaching children about consent and permission for a long time. So the fact that it's still happening on campuses—and we've heard this from other communities—is shocking. I just want your comments on this.

I loved what you said about the keys to success: an increased perception that change is desirable—and behaviours—an increased readiness to change and an increase in skill levels. It feels a little bit like an example of, say, drinking and driving and the amount of education and resources that we've poured into that. Does that feel like an example, to you, of successful behaviour change in other areas of society?

Dr. Charlene Senn: Yes, and certainly of successful bystander intervention. Back at the beginning, when people would leave a party and get in the car, they'd think, "Can they drive?" but no one would have done anything. That would have been extremely unusual. Now this is a very different thing. Not only are there laws that bartenders can't serve people or they are empowered to take away keys, but people generally will not permit people they love, or even strangers, to drive because they're about to harm someone. So I think that is a really good example of how you empower a whole community, a whole citizenry, to take this issue seriously and then to intervene. The difference here, of course, is that sometimes the emergency is not as obvious, just as it wasn't obvious then that this particular behaviour is deadly—and in this case, that this constellation of things that might not look like emergencies on the face of it are, and we need to take action and intervene early.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It became socially unacceptable.

Dr. Charlene Senn: Yes, and make it totally socially unacceptable.

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The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for taking the time to be here but also for your work.

I know you have a paper due June 11, so I don't know how much you can tell me, but what is it that we can do in the first year of university or frosh week? Is there something you can just narrow right down that we can do?

Dr. Charlene Senn: I think orientation and frosh week is often when people want to do something. Because it's so crowded with other things, including the adjustment for university, I think that what we can do is open up conversations there. We are strongly recom-

mending—and it's going to be happening at Windsor—that we actually get the bystander-type training to all of the older students who are leading things at orientation, training them to intervene, to nip things in the bud, to make sure they understand policies—all of those things. That is probably more successful.

If you think about what's normally done in orientation—I know at Windsor for a while, it was a play called *Single and Sexy* that did plagiarism, sexual harassment, sexual violence, drinking and alcohol addictions, gambling addictions and eating disorders—did I already say that?—all in 20 minutes. That's not prevention, but it might get students talking a little bit and make them more likely to look for that workshop that's in their class later.

For orientation, I think the best thing is to train the people who are running it and really make sure they have in-depth bystander intervention training so that they are empowered to stop things they see. Then, I think, in the first year—which has been called the red zone, because year 1 or years 1 and 2 are the highest risk for sexual violence—we do need to get our more involved training in, I would suggest, both sexual assault resistance for women and, for both men and women, bystander intervention training. Those really do seem to be our most effective options.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Great. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for that excellent presentation. A couple of things: You spent some time initially in your presentation talking about the evidence on rape resistance programs for women versus programs to prevent men from assaulting, and there's a debate within the sector about those two approaches. Your research for CIHR is focused on the women's resistance. Why did you decide to go in that direction rather than focusing on—

Dr. Charlene Senn: I want to be clear that some of the resistance is about the really horrible programs and advertising that were directed at women historically that really were about restricting women's behaviour. It was not telling men not to rape; it was telling women they shouldn't drink too much, right?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes.

Dr. Charlene Senn: That is not what I'm talking about at all. I'm talking about empowering women to see the risk in situations and to work together or by themselves to try to create interesting solutions to reduce perpetrator advantage, because there is no risk in any situation without a perpetrator standing there. You can drink 12 drinks with no risk to yourself. Rape is not a crime that is enacted on you because you drank; it's because there's a perpetrator in the room who takes advantage of every opportunity in his environment. So this is about empowering women.

The reason I did is because the programs for men are completely ineffective or worse. I am also doing the bystander work, but that's a longer-term solution. In the meantime, we know some things that will help women better defend themselves; why would we not give them

those opportunities? In my study, only 22 women would have to go through the program for one completed rape to be averted.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Are we in the process of finding programs that are effective in preventing men from assaulting?

Dr. Charlene Senn: I think the thing that you'll see in that research is that there's only that one, and it's grades 8 and 9. We have to go way back for the prevention of men once they have established—I mean, 60% of university and college rapists are multiple, repeat perpetrators. They're deliberate. They basically plan it. The other 40% do not, but that is not going to be fixed by any three-hour program or 12-hour program when they're adults. The only way to intervene is younger.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Right. Can I just quickly ask: The focus of the government's new initiative is around requiring post-secondary institutions to have policies. Can you comment a bit about what would be needed in a policy to make it effective? You mentioned dedicated funding for sustainability purposes, but are there other elements that you would identify?

Dr. Charlene Senn: Part of the problem is that most policies don't have anything to do with prevention. They might say that the university is committed to prevention, but unless there are designated funds, they're basically going to consider those things they did in orientation that we know are not effective. So that's why I'm talking about—yes, policies are really important. They state a university's condemnation of sexual violence; they start that community of concern. They start all of that, but alone, that's not prevention.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Dr. Senn, thank you very much for coming and informing this committee of the important work that you are doing. We invite you to join the audience now if you wish to.

LONDON ABUSED WOMEN'S CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters from the London Abused Women's Centre to come forward.

Ms. Megan Walker: Thank you. Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Begin by stating your name and your organization.

Ms. Megan Walker: My name is Megan Walker and I am the executive director of the London Abused Women's Centre in London, Ontario. We are a feminist organization providing advocacy support and counselling to girls and women over the age of 12 who have been assaulted in their intimate relationships, or assaulted in a hooking-up relationship, for young people. We also work with prostituted and trafficked women. Last year, we served 3,500 women and responded to 5,000 phone calls. We certainly appreciate the opportunity to be with you today. Thank you so much.

We are pleased to see a new plan that has been developed now, which includes a gender-based analysis.

We believe that is critical because we know that men's violence against women and children in society occurs because of a power imbalance, and power and privilege that men hold. We actually advocated for a gender-based analysis in 2011 when we were first consulted on a sexual violence action plan.

We are concerned about a few aspects of the plan as it stands. We feel, in some regard, that while it's well intentioned, it is only an enhanced version of the previous plan. Our commitment at the London Abused Women's Centre is to shift the culture for future generations, with the goal of ultimately ending men's violence against women. We can only do this if we acknowledge the systemic and cultural issues that contribute to the violence and then take action to end it. This acknowledgement must include a recognition that today's sexualized culture is inescapable for both boys and girls, and we must make sure that any action we take will end the sexualization of girls.

Our first recommendation to you today is that the plan address the rise of Internet pornography by raising public awareness about its actual content and name it as both men's violence against women and a public health issue. The pornography industry is having a profound impact on men's sexuality, views of women and behaviours. Pornography is getting more violent, and the age of those males watching it now is getting younger and younger.

In fact, market research shows that the average age a boy will watch pornography is age 11. A study from the University of Alberta found that one third of 13-year-old boys had admitted to watching pornography, and a study published by *Psychologies* magazine in the UK found that a third of 14- to 16-year-olds had first seen sexual images online when they were 10 years old or younger. Some 80% of those polled looked at porn online at home, while 63% could easily access it on their mobile phones.

Pornography normalizes sexual violence and abuse against women. Women report to us that their partners are asking them to fulfill the acts they have seen in pornographic videos. In pornography, women are reduced to mere sex objects rather than human beings. Some women report that their partners are no longer able to become sexually aroused at home unless watching violent pornography, where women are held in headlocks, choked or having their heads thrust into toilets. We should not be surprised that there are issues today around consent, because in pornography when women say no, the message is, "Do it harder and do it longer."

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If we look at the tragic circumstances of the suicide of Rehtaeh Parsons, who was intoxicated and vomiting out a window—regardless, the boys believed that they had a right to sexually assault her and photograph the violence; or the case of the rape victim in Steubenville, Ohio, who was passed out while being raped and photographed—this is pornography.

When do you think they're learning all of this? The average age is 11. It is their first experience with sex, and they're looking at pornography as their sex education.

We need to raise awareness around the harms of pornography to girls and women. Boys need to learn that pornography is violent and that learning to grow into a good and decent man does not include violence. Girls need to learn that they are valued, that there is more for them in life than being a sex object, that they are valued internally, instead of trying to get their value from the attraction of men and boys.

We must recognize pornography as men's violence against women, and we must make sure that all levels of government work together to impose restrictions on the availability of pornography. Did you know that in the province of Ontario most publicly funded libraries allow access to pornography? That does not create safe spaces for women or children. When we have raised this issue, we have been told, "Well, pornography is a freedom-of-expression issue and should be made available at publicly funded facilities." It is not a freedom-of-expression issue. It is a hate crime against women and girls, and the government must take action.

We, secondly, are recommending to the committee that the Sexual Violence Action Plan recognizes that prostitution is men's violence against women. We have been working with prostituted and trafficked women for 15 years. We know that there is a relationship between prostitution and sex trafficking. The relationship is the common bond that it is men who are buying sex from women and young girls.

The federal government has recently recognized that prostitution is inherently violent, and passed legislation to criminalize those men who choose—it is the men who choose—to buy sex from women. It further has decriminalized women in prostitution and provided funding to support prostituted and trafficked women in exiting. Buying sex from women gives men permission to violate them. While men believe that the women and girls they are buying are nothing more than a product, it allows them to then do as they please to that product that they have just purchased.

Women in this country cannot consent to being assaulted. In prostitution, however, consent is ignored. The philosophy is, "I am spending my money to fulfill my fantasy, no matter how abusive and harmful my fantasy is." Little girls do not grow up striving for a career in prostitution. Those girls who are prostituted at a young age, those exploited girls often become adults in prostitution who have no choice but to remain because they have no other skills. They are forced into prostitution because of poverty, mental health or substance use issues. There is only one party actively choosing this, and that is those men who choose to abuse, violate and exploit women and girls. Prostitution is not sex work and should never be considered work. It is men's violence against women, and it must be acknowledged as such. There has been far too much time given to the prostitution lobby, who believe prostitution is work, and there has been so little time given to survivors and women actively still in prostitution who want out, and to allies and agencies like ours.

Again, we need to teach boys at a very young age what consent means. It does not include buying sex and harming women.

When the Liberal government originally opposed the federal government's prostitution legislation, it did so with little or no consultation with survivors. While we are grateful that Premier Wynne has now found the legislation to be constitutionally sound, there has been no statement or policy on prostitution at all as a form of men's violence against women.

We are in full support of the trafficking task force proposed by MPP Laurie Scott. We work with too many girls and women trafficked across this country and sometimes into other countries. We believe the provincial government has a long way to go in addressing the seriousness of this.

The new trend, of course, is lover boy or Romeo trafficking and prostitution, where a boyfriend, partner or husband starts actively trafficking his girlfriend, wife or partner. This is a very serious issue. Last year, we served 300 prostituted women, and 50 of them were involved with a boyfriend who was pimping them out. We also work with their families, who are desperate to get their children out of the sex industry.

A task force is a no-brainer, and we believe that failing to establish one is akin to burying your heads in the sand.

We further recommend that a sexual violence action plan recognize sexual violence as a tactic of abuse within intimate relationships. We see a great number of women in our office—in fact, the overwhelming majority, 79%—who report being sexually assaulted by their partners. Sometimes the tactics of sexual violence can include sexual activity that is unwanted or coerced; things like sexual name-calling or accusations; uninformed sexual activity, like non-disclosure of STIs; and forced pregnancy or termination of pregnancy. Some of these women we serve disclose to us that they are being forced to engage in sex with multiple partners, being forced into anal intercourse, being forced to watch pornographic films and then act out those fantasies, and in one case, a woman reported to us that her partner sewed her vagina shut while he went away on a trip. Women disclose to us that they are called sluts and whores by their partners, sometimes when they're angry, but other times because it sexually arouses him. Women report being awakened from a deep sleep to satisfy their partners, fearful of the consequences should they refuse.

Sexual violence and abuse in intimate relationships is under-reported due to the shame, embarrassment and false belief that women are there to serve and satisfy their partners.

Our next recommendation is that the domestic violence legislation be amended to recognize the failure of the justice system to hold violent and abusive men accountable for their behaviours.

The Sexual Violence Action Plan refers to the domestic violence legislation in courts as if it's a good thing, something to be duplicated for sexual violence cases.

This legislation, the domestic violence courts, continues to fail women. In Ontario, the conviction rate in DV cases that go to trial is less than 1%. I think that's despicable.

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The early intervention program—a diversion opportunity for those charged with assault that allows that if they enter an early guilty plea and it's a first offence, no weapons are used and the batterer goes to a male battering program, he can be given an absolute discharge with no criminal finding. We know that while sometimes it is a first offence before the courts, it is rarely a first offence for the woman. She has likely been assaulted numerous times prior to police and justice involvement. Weapons: The criminal justice system is looking for weapons that include guns and knives. They do not consider hands a weapon. They do not consider a tea towel used to strangle a woman to be a weapon. In essence, what the early intervention program has done is decriminalize men's violence against women.

The cases that do move to the coordinated prosecution model continue to rely on the woman's testimony for a conviction. In what other crime would a conviction be solely reliant upon a victim? None. Women are often fearful of the outcome of their testimony, and so much time has often gone by before the charge makes its way to trial that they may have reconciled or moved on with their lives and aren't available to testify.

Finally, we recommend that sexual assault crimes before the courts be expedited much more quickly.

I recently sat in on the first day of a trial where a London lawyer who accepts legal aid certificates was tried for sexually assaulting his clients. From the time the charges were laid until the trial date was three full years. One woman had previously met with the crown a year ago to drop the charges. She had moved on in her life and was not willing to be retraumatized through a trial. On the date of the trial, the other women did not appear in court. Again, three years—their lives go on. They don't want to be retraumatized. The lawyer, of course, then is found not guilty due to lack of evidence.

How is it possible to take three years to try sexual assault cases but the fraud charges and trial of London's mayor were addressed in only a year? It doesn't make sense. I'm asking you to put the lives of women first and to take any action that will shift the culture for future generations because in my lifetime I'd like to see a little bit of movement to help my children, my three daughters and their daughters.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. Tremendous testimony.

Ms. Megan Walker: Thank you.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you for supporting my motion. You made points that are just—what we keep hearing is, it's disgraceful how we're treating abused victims. The long court processes—your comparisons

were excellent. The information that you've given I think is going to help us a lot in making recommendations being brought forward. So I appreciate that part.

We have limited time so I can only get one question in. I'm sure the Chair is looking at me. But when you spoke about teaching boys at a young age, can you elaborate on how—it's delicate. It starts at public school, I'm assuming. I don't know what you're going to say, but how can you get in there and how do you get parental buy-in? They almost need some education too, to some degree, because it's culturally unacceptable, what goes on right now.

Ms. Megan Walker: One of the things that I know right now is that there's a shift. More and more parents are accepting that their children will be the ones responsible—it's their generation—to end men's violence against women.

We propose getting into kindergarten classes and doing games and role-plays. We propose that as it moves up through the grades, kids are outright talked to about: What is sexual violence? What is men's violence against women, and what role do they have in eliminating it?

When a child is exposed to violence in her home, she's a child who may be in need of protection. This is impacting our children, and as we always say, when you hurt a woman you are also hurting her child. For parents to raise a ruckus around that—I really don't think it will happen. At the London Abused Women's Centre we are so overwhelmingly supported by our community, financially and otherwise. We have the Shine the Light on Woman Abuse campaign in London, which runs—you've got it here now, actually; it's starting in Windsor—throughout the month of November. Schools across London and Ontario are starting to participate in wearing purple to show support for abused women. They have colouring contests. That's how it opens the discussion.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, Megan, for making the trip from London to be here today. And thank you for your very specific recommendations.

One recommendation I wanted to focus on was around the prevalence of sexual violence in intimate-partner relationships. We know that, historically, the government has treated sexual assault and domestic violence very separately. They're siloed, very separate kinds of programs. We've heard from other presenters to this committee that there's a need to better integrate those two kinds of approaches, and I wondered if you could talk to us more about that.

Ms. Megan Walker: Well, we do know that with the women we serve who choose to go to the police, if it's a sexual assault, their partners will be charged with sexual assault, because of course the legislation changed in the 1980s to make sexually assaulting your partner illegal. But it's very, very difficult.

What we need to remember is that back almost 18 years now, a young woman by the name of Arlene May was killed by Randy Iles in the Collingwood area. The

specific recommendations that came out of the coroner's inquest—there were 212 recommendations, actually; many of which have never been implemented all these years later—but there is an opening paragraph which I think is very compelling. It says that we need to recognize that in intimate-partner relationships there is a relationship, and those two individuals will share custody of their children or property. It's not like random acts of violence.

As a result, we need very specific domestic violence legislation, and I would be just thrilled if you could work with the federal government on that. We've been advocating for that now for about a dozen years as well. We need specific legislation that recognizes that the relationship between the two parties may continue.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much for your presentation. You're hitting the nail on the head. We all know that there have been several gaps in the sexual violence against women action plan that this committee is looking at addressing.

There are two nuts of the matter that I see. Number one is, what makes men offend? I think you're addressing that, and from what I hear from you, pornography is a huge issue. Number two is the court system.

I'll just go back to number one. You obviously are very supportive of our sex ed curriculum changes. (1) Does it go far enough? (2) What age would you really focus on? Those are my first two questions.

Ms. Megan Walker: I am supportive of sex ed in the schools but I think it's missing a really huge component, which is that it does not address the power imbalance of women and men in society. The sex ed curriculum really approaches the issue as if there are these two equal parties and we need to teach them how to have sex responsibly and with consent. But you can't do that until you recognize the power imbalance. So I would suggest, again, that it be developed with a gender analysis, because I think that's missing right now.

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I think it's also interesting that the sex ed plan talks about anal sex, because anal sex is a product of pornography. Anal sex is not something that was ever normal in society. I'm not saying it was abnormal, but it was not normalized. It is now expected by most men and boys, and I think that needs to be addressed as well.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you. The second part of it is the court system. How do we turn our court system on its head, if need be, to address not only encouraging victims of domestic and sexual violence to come forward, but how do we address it in your perfect world if we were able to change it?

Ms. Megan Walker: A few things: I think there needs to be legislation that mandates police officers from across the province to do thorough investigations in the same way they would in a bank robbery, so that they're not solely reliant on the victim to testify. So often, victims are extremely terrified to testify because if there is no

conviction and their abuser is out right away, and even if there is a conviction and he gets 90 days to serve on weekends, she's in trouble. So we need to look forward to a time when we can actually take these issues to the courts and know that we're not going to rely upon the victim's testimony for a conviction.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Would that include those who are being convicted of pornography charges or prostitution charges?

Ms. Megan Walker: Yes, and so we need an enhanced investigation and that doesn't—it may be a resource issue or an unwillingness to do it, but we're going to continue to see less than 1% conviction rates until we provide a way to allow for conviction without the women testifying.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Walker, thank you very much for coming and informing this committee today.

Ms. Megan Walker: Thank you. If I might just say one thing to Ms. McGarry, your brother-in-law is a friend of mine. I told him I was coming, and he said to send his love and best wishes.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much.

Ms. Megan Walker: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you for that important message. We invite you to join the audience now, if you wish to.

MR. GREG LEMAY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next witness, Gregory Lemay. Please make yourself comfortable. You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed for questions for you. For the record, state your name and let us know if you are with an organization.

Mr. Greg Lemay: It's Greg Lemay, just with my own legal business, Lemay Law.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And begin.

Mr. Greg Lemay: Okay. Good morning, committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak on sexual harassment and violence today. My name is Greg Lemay, from Windsor, Ontario. I have a background in political science, family social relations, addictions and also in the legal field. I previously presented at Queen's Park on Michael Prue's Bill 49, known as tipping out.

Today's topic does not reflect me directly; however, I know I can advocate for those who may be too embarrassed, scared or shy, and I will be advocating for a person that has passed on due to our failure to act in a timely manner.

Although I'm not a victim of crime regarding sexual harassment and violence, I feel I can shed some light on certain issues surrounding violence and sexual harassment. I've researched case after case, document after document and statistical data, some 400 pages. I'm relying on this information to complete my research. I'm well aware of the issues that surround women with violence and harassment. This violence and harassment

takes place in many forms, and I've decided to speak about some of them here today.

You're also here, I believe, as Ontarians. We can better assist victims of crime, help policing services solve crime as well as go deeper than what this committee is looking for. I commend Premier Wynne for pushing this issue, but I believe it's just the beginning stages of what could be in the future.

Everyone has a list of some statistics in front of you. I'll just touch on a few. Of every 100 instances of sexual assault, only six are reported to the police. One in four North American women will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime; 60% of sexual abuse assault victims are under the age of 17; 17% of girls under 16 have experienced some form of incest; half of all sexual offenders are married or in long-term relationships; and 57% of aboriginal women have been sexually abused.

Some sexual assaults are by medical doctors, dentists, employers or co-workers, teachers, priests, police or probation officers, caregivers or parents, family members and friends. Those statistics are shocking as well as disappointing. Some important aspects to point out here are that sexual assault is far more common than one would suspect, and young and vulnerable women are most likely to be sexually abused.

For some reason, our society has adopted stereotypes regarding sexual assault that are largely inconsistent with the statistical data. This is probably a result of our society repressing facts regarding sex and sexuality in general. The stigma that is unfortunately attached to sex crimes also promotes a lack of communication. It is our job to dispose of that stigma and stereotype so that others come forward. We ask that victims of crime come forward to report crimes because it helps reduce the risk of other people being assaulted. Sexual assault is among the crimes which are least likely to be reported to police.

Going back to 1999, the General Social Survey on Victimization found that 78% of sexual assaults were not reported.

In addition, one major issue is that in some cases the offence is not reported to police until long after, making it very difficult for the prosecutor to gain a conviction.

Looking at statistics on why most are not reported to police, I found these to be the most popular: 61%, the incident was dealt with in another way; 50%, it was deemed not to be important enough; 50%, it was considered to be a personal matter; 40% did not want the police involved; 33% thought the police cannot do anything about it; 18% actually thought the police would not help them; 20% did not report because they were fearful that the offender would seek revenge; and 14% wanted to stay out of the public eye regarding the incident. Some other reasons given were privacy and confidentiality issues, the sensitive nature of the events, fear of publicity, and some felt it didn't concern police because it was a personal matter.

I was surprised that 18% actually thought the police would not help them, so I asked myself why. I approached numerous women, and here was one of the

most popular answers: Many felt that police are corrupt in some way, shape or form—not all, but some officers. Police need to prove to the general public that they can perform their job accordingly while upholding the law, as well as in their personal lives. We often see police officers being charged for sexual assault and so forth. In my opinion, if this way of thinking doesn't change, people will continue to view police as unhelpful as it relates to sex crimes. Obviously, the thinking needs to change so more victims come forward.

We know that of 1,000 sexual assaults, only 33 cases are reported, 12 result in a charge being laid, only six are prosecuted and three will lead to a conviction.

Who's at risk? Who's vulnerable? I reference Bill C-46, Records Applications Post-Mills, a Caselaw Review. We know gender is the most important factor. That said, females are more likely to be victims of sexual assault than any other type of violent crime. The most eye-popping statistic on this factor is that in 2002 women represented approximately half of all victims of violent offences; however, women accounted for 85% of victims of sexual offences reported to a sample of police services.

Sexual aggression against women is widespread in Canadian society, and women may experience multiple incidents of this crime in their lifetimes.

Sobsey found that children and adults with disabilities are particularly at risk for becoming victims of sexual abuse or assault. Some 40% of women with disabilities have been assaulted, sexually assaulted or abused in some way, and 83% of women with disabilities will be assaulted, sexually assaulted or abused in their lifetimes.

Age also affects vulnerability, especially if you're under the age of 18. These groups of women make up the largest proportion of residents of shelters in Canada. This group is roughly one fifth of the population, at 21%. However, they were victims of 61% of sexual offences reported to police. The highest number of police-reported sexual offences were against girls between the ages of 11 and 19, peaking at age 13.

Sexual harassment is any behaviour or communication directed at someone with the intention of attacking their sexuality, sexual identity or sense of safety. Those who experience this behaviour may feel uncomfortable, threatened or humiliated. This may come as a shock to most, but sexual harassment is not illegal in Canada. It is merely a human rights violation. We have all experienced them—the sexual jokes; unwanted sexually suggestive looks or gestures; unwanted sexual emails, text messages or Facebook messages; unwanted comments; and some have even been whistled at and so forth. Just like in sexual assault, there's no consent in sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment can happen any time or anywhere—the street, school, work, home. According to the human rights commission, 87% of women in Canada reported being a victim of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment has led to stalking. The two go hand in hand. Stalking is the fifth most common offence committed against women. We know that 85% of perpetrators in stalking incidents against women are men.

Did you know that just over a quarter of Canadians have been sexually harassed in the workplace? According to the Angus Reid Institute, women were more than three times as likely to experience harassment in the workplace. Some 25% of Canadians who reported sexual harassment at work found management unresponsive and dismissive. Only 40% of bosses undertook a serious investigation and took appropriate action. Some 48% reported they were harassed two to five times, and 28% were harassed in five-plus instances. And 24% of Canadians who reported sexual harassment at work experienced it within the last two years.

What's interesting is that 21% of women think it's acceptable to be called "sexy" at work; 16% said the issue of workplace sexual harassment is overblown.

Filing a complaint takes courage due to the stigma attached or fear of retaliation.

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The 2008 Federal Jurisdiction Workplace Survey reported that 87% of employers who work under federal jurisdiction work for an organization with a harassment prevention program in place; 77% work for an organization with an appeal process against a decision related to harassment; and 76% work for an organization with a dispute or grievance review process. That said, the smaller the organization, the less likely they are to have a process like this in place. I find these statistics somewhat embarrassing for today's day and age. Why not 100%? We have not done enough to ensure that victims have proper recourse. We should all seek to find better ways to address this before more damage is done.

On November 12, 2005, a Windsor nurse, the late Lori Dupont, was murdered at the former Hôtel-Dieu Grace Hospital, where she worked. Lori was often harassed by her ex-boyfriend, Dr. Marc Daniel, who eventually stabbed her to death. This event led to Bill 168, now known as section 32 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which became law on June 15, 2010. It represents a significant change in how and to what extent both workplace violence and workplace harassment are regulated in Ontario. It often broadens the definition of workplace violence, and places new requirements on Ontario employers.

I'll just mention a few of the changes that came into effect with this bill:

- develop written policies that are posted with respect to workplace violence and harassment policies;
- develop a workplace violence and harassment program;
- establish practice of how the employer investigates and manages incidents, complaints or threats of workplace violence; and
- employee refusal to work where he or she has reason to believe that he or she is in danger of being a victim of workplace violence.

The number of sexual assaults reported in Canadian post-secondary schools is extremely low. When 87 universities were asked by the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. how many sexual assaults were reported, it was found

that Ryerson University in Toronto had the highest amount of reports in Canada. Since then, Acadia in Nova Scotia has taken over that statistic. At the University of Ottawa, as many as 44% of female students experienced some form of sexual violence or unwanted sexual touching while on campus; it seems only 10 students reported an assault to the University of Ottawa in 2013.

Overall, only 179 assaults were reported to 87 Canadian universities in 2013. What strikes me as odd is that Dalhousie University declined to participate, claiming they didn't have the proper data; and Mount Allison University, the reason being that it was very difficult to comment on the number of sexual assaults on campus.

Although it is difficult to get a true picture of sexual assault prevalence wherever it takes place, we must do a better job of encouraging students to come forward and be transparent. Students should be able to ask questions about how the data is collected and recorded, and how a school responds to such complaints.

Overall, I believe schools are failing sexual assault victims. We know that one in five women will experience some form of sexual assault during their time at school. Lori Chambers, a professor at Lakehead, says, "I think it's important that every institution have a policy about sexual misconduct that states explicitly what behaviours are prohibited, the rights victims have and the supports available to help them heal."

This brings me to the Canadian Armed Forces. CAF refuses to create a fully independent agency to receive complaints of inappropriate sexual conduct and offer support to victims of sexual assault and harassment. Other countries, namely the United States, France and Australia, have created an agency outside of the chain of command.

General Lawson of the Canadian Armed Forces called for a cultural shift coming from the inside. Women suffer routinely degrading expressions, sexual jokes and unwanted touching. In one article I found, a quote saying that there is not a female who has not had a problem since joining the forces.

On February 25, 2015, the Canadian Armed Forces took some progressive action and developed a strategic response team on sexual misconduct. Although that's not nearly enough as in the other countries stated above, it's somewhat promising. This team will lead in short-term measures and actions, and develop the long-term measures and actions required to address the problems of inappropriate sexual behaviour. Clearly we need to do a better job to cease sexual harassment and assault within the Canadian Armed Forces.

One of the main problems facing most organizations is a widespread perception that it is acceptable to objectify women's bodies and make hurtful jokes.

That brings me to consent. It is important to discuss the issue of consent, so those unaware are educated on the topic. I do find it favourable that Premier Wynne's new curriculum outlines this with our children. Let's at least have the conversation. No means no, and in some instances which I will point out today, yes doesn't always mean yes.

I have the particulars of, in my opinion, the most important case regarding consent and proper definition. *Regina v. J.A.* was a 2011 Supreme Court of Canada case. On May 22, 2007, J.A. and his long-term girlfriend, K.D., began having consensual sexual activity together. During the sexual activity, K.D. consented for J.A. to choke her as part of the sexual activity. K.D. lost consciousness for approximately three minutes, and she understood this might happen when she consented to being choked. While K.D. was unconscious, J.A. tied K.D. up and performed additional sexual acts on her.

In her testimony, K.D. was not clear whether she knew or consented to the sexual activity J.A. performed on her while she was unconscious. After K.D. regained consciousness, she and J.A. continued having consensual sexual activity.

On July 11, 2007, K.D. made a complaint to the police, saying that the activity was not consensual, although she later recanted her statement. J.A. was charged with aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, attempting to render a person unconscious in order to sexually assault them, and breaching a probation order. The holding in the case: The Supreme Court of Canada found that a person can only legally consent to sexual activity if they have an operating mind during the sexual activity in question. Therefore, performing sexual activity on an unconscious person is a criminal offence, whether the unconscious person consented in advance—which is awesome news. This is extremely important to understand, because this case was appealed and then granted leave to the Supreme Court of Canada. A quote from J.A. in his response is that a doctor operates on a patient who is unconscious without ongoing consent, “so this must have been okay for me.”

The current economic downturn may further add to this problem as all levels of government are going to be forced to cut budgets, while citizens are committing crimes to financially survive. For this reason, it is critical to increase police resources—more effective sharing protocols with other police agencies, increase money for sex crimes and more useful tools for crowns. It's evident that we need harsher penalties on sexually related offences. Victims of crime should be encouraged to step forward without fear and stigmas.

I demand that we shift social norms. Earlier I said that this committee isn't digging deep enough. We need to discuss ways to help people report crimes and ways to reduce criminal activity. We need to ensure that all public places have a process for reporting and make it law. We should do a better job and keep a watchful eye on workplaces, in the Canadian Armed Forces and post-secondary schools, and ensure victims' rights are front and centre.

I worked at a local hospital for almost 10 years, and I find we need to change the process of reporting. As it stands, victims enter the emergency department and often share confidential information with a front-line security officer or guard who directs them to the appropriate area. Victims then report to triage, which is not confidential

due to the lack of walls, windows and doors. Triage is wide open, and the entire emergency waiting room can hear everything more often than not.

We know that victims already have stigmas, perceived or not, but for some reason we have failed to construct a more positive process to ensure that these situations are private and confidential. I'm suggesting a text message call centre to report sex crimes where victims could make appointments to report directly to a sexual assault treatment centre without visiting triage. We should make changes on how the media reports sex crimes. We know that victims are intimidated after the crime is committed, so why intimidate further? We know that a good percentage do not want the situation made public. Limiting the media is in the best interests of all victims of sexual harassment and violence.

I'm convinced, unless laws and emphasis are changed, that nothing will change. We should look to grassroots, having mandatory education and guest speakers for students, young and old, so that the correct information is shared. We should set up information tables, put up posters, have large demonstrations and encourage Neighbourhood Watch to hold house meetings, to engage the community to end sexual harassment and violence.

I'd like to finish by saying thank you to all who have come here representing this cause. We can flourish by standing as one and saying no to sexual harassment and violence.

Social media has ruined us to the point where we hide behind computer screens and send sexual messages and harass others. I do not deduce that most of what is being said behind a screen or a keyboard is said in person. Somewhere we lost what it means to be proper and old-fashioned, and that true respect for one another as brothers and sisters. We need to be there for each other, especially victims of crime. We can only prosper by protecting what is sacred to us, as it has been since the dawn of time, and that's our women and our children.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from MPP Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Mr. Lemay, for your quite in-depth presentation. You referenced a lot of statistical data. I hope that we get a chance to look at it. I don't know if you've actually had the ability to reference each point—

Mr. Greg Lemay: Oh, yes, for sure. I actually have most of them.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —because I find some of it shocking in that some are higher than I had imagined and some are lower than I could have ever imagined, so I'd like to take a closer look at that, as I'm sure the committee would as well.

You gave a broad range of recommendations, both societal, cultural and legal, as is your profession. I wonder if you could focus on legislative reforms. What do you see as glaring gaps, either in your practice or your experience, that might point the committee in that direction, as is obviously our universe, to be able to influence legislation?

We heard earlier that there are still some gaps in Bill 168, either on the enforcement side or otherwise. You also referenced harsher penalties for crimes of sexual assault and sexual abuse. I'm wondering what your thoughts are on those specifically.

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Mr. Greg Lemay: Let's get to the penalties first. For a summary offence you're looking at 18 months and for an indictable offence you're looking at 10 years. You can get worse things for theft. There are a lot worse penalties for less heinous crimes.

I guess I'm looking at the police. The woman who spoke before me said that you're relying solely on the woman's testimony. That, to me, isn't right, and I think that is your biggest problem. If there is a way to take her testimony and not put holes in her story—I don't know; I guess I see it as a woman going to a police department, reporting a crime; she's being interrogated and she's almost made to be the one at fault. Do you get where I'm going with that? I think there are better ways to do it. I don't know if it's done by education of police officers and crowns or the prosecution, or if there are better ways, like I said, of educating them. I guess that's where I'm at with that.

Mr. Taras Matyshak: That's okay. Specific legislative reforms: Do you see any gaps in current legislation, maybe Bill 168?

Mr. Greg Lemay: Sure. The way I see this is that with Bill 168, it's strictly to do with the employers and employees. There's nothing that I found that has anything to do with post-secondary schools, the Canadian Armed Forces, anything outside of the workplace. So there needs to be something in place to take care of the other organizations.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here today. I really appreciate all the numbers and the information provided.

Mr. Greg Lemay: Too many numbers, huh?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I like numbers. But I want to ask you, just from your experience: Why do you think there are not more people reporting the cases of abuse?

Mr. Greg Lemay: Like I discussed earlier, victims are afraid. They don't want to come forward. They're shy. They're embarrassed. They're made to feel like they're in the wrong. Again, a lot of people don't want the publicity. Just talking to some females, I think that their whole thing was, "Look, if this happens to me, I don't want to be front and centre. I don't want to be this girl who reports this kind of stuff." Do you know what I'm saying? It's almost like a stigma. They're afraid to do it.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: What would you recommend for this committee, based on what these ladies are reporting to you or stating to you? How can we help them feel better?

Mr. Greg Lemay: Like I said before: getting to grass-roots. We can talk to people. We can make people more

educated on the subject, again, if they're afraid of reporting. My issue that I saw working at a hospital for 10 years was that girls were coming in and disclosing that to the front person, which is the security guard, and I don't think that's right. They were discussing that with the security guard, and then a wide-open triage room where everyone was seeing and hearing. There could have been 100 people in that waiting room, and everyone just heard what happened.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: So what you're saying is that the process of the victim as she enters the hospital should have a different approach?

Mr. Greg Lemay: Absolutely. Again, I think that's where I went with the text message call centre. So if you were a victim of crime, you could sit here and text a number and say, "I want to meet up with a sexual assault treatment centre nurse," as opposed to going in that way and going through triage.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: You also referred—and I'm sorry, Mr. Lemay; I just want to go back—to women with disabilities, and I put "40%"; there were high numbers at risk. Is there anything you can tell this committee as to how we can prevent the high number within the population of disabled women?

Mr. Greg Lemay: I think, again, with education. I think if we educate them and there are meetings or there is somebody who checks on them or a family member who can maybe even check on them to report this—in some way, shape or form there has to be some type of way for them to report it. They probably feel that nobody is going to believe them anyway, and that's sad.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Can I just say something? I want to say thank you for being here and advocating, actually, from a personal point of view, to this committee, as a man.

Mr. Greg Lemay: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you also for coming forward and for sharing what experiences you've seen out there.

I had brought in a motion that was passed unanimously in the Legislature about a guns and gangs similar task force for human trafficking. The bigger issue was dedicated education but also special training for police services, crowns and for judges.

The speaker before you mentioned the fact that the process is too long, if you can get a prosecution. The victims need to move on; they're survivors. How do you feel about a dedicated and faster—obviously—system in dealing with these perpetrators?

Mr. Greg Lemay: For sure, a faster system, obviously, works out better for the victim, right? If the victim has to sit there for, again, three years and wait for trial or wait for a conviction, then she's probably going to move on. I think that having something faster—like the woman before me said, some crimes are dealt with in less than a year, and this one, we're sitting here for three years.

There's obviously a huge problem there and there's a gap. Again, I support what you're saying, for sure.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, it will address, certainly, the conviction rates that we see.

Definitely, I spoke about the education everywhere, from front-line hospital staff to be trained to look for signs earlier to activate a system. Some communities are doing a more intricate job, I could say, than others are. That's why I was trying to ask for more of a coordinated strategy province-wide.

Education is everything, from bailiffs, to see when victims encounter—even asking for municipal bylaws, licensing for exotic dancing. I don't know if you've ever seen that in your practice, but it's a whole system that needs to be pulled together so the supports are there for victims, but also the justice system is there to support and to prosecute faster.

I didn't know if you wanted to add anything more that you had in your statement.

Mr. Greg Lemay: No; I just support that. That's awesome. That's good to hear, actually.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Well, we're trying. We're all trying here today.

Mr. Greg Lemay: It's a start, right?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, absolutely. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Lemay, thank you very much for coming forward and speaking to our committee today.

Committee members, that wraps up our morning hearings. We will reconvene at 1 p.m. We stand now in recess.

The committee recessed from 1119 to 1300.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order and continue with our afternoon hearing.

I'd like to welcome the presenters and guests who are here with us today, and I want to reiterate our mandate for this committee. We're here to listen to your experiences—of survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts—on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You are going to inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. However, I do want to stress that we do not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

I welcome you.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SERVICES ELGIN COUNTY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call up our first guest: Liz Brown with Violence Against Women Services Elgin County. Hello again. Please make yourself comfortable. We had a chance to meet on the road during our committee on finance and economic affairs.

Ms. Liz Brown: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin, for the record, saying your name and your organization. You

will have 20 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions.

Ms. Liz Brown: Absolutely. I'm just organizing my notes. My name is Liz Brown and I work at Violence Against Women Services Elgin County. We're located in St. Thomas and we serve women and children 365 days of the year, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Our idea of service is to walk with women and children as they seek safety from harm and violence and to provide counsel and support.

I wanted to begin by thanking your Premier actually for bringing this conversation to a public space: to be able to hear your recent announcements about sexual violence and your plan to address it; to see the leadership that you have taken about something that is a really painful issue, difficult to discuss, often talked about in less public forums; and to see what has now been a really painful discussion of the reality of sexual violence start to turn into a beautiful discussion of literally hundreds and thousands of women telling their stories of sexual harm towards them.

I believe we're at a truth-telling moment in our province where we are actually letting this reality settle into our bones. I believe we know that one in three women worldwide are sexually abused as adult women. I believe we know that, in Canada, one in four women are sexually abused after the age of 16. That's at least two of us in this room.

We know that one in four little girls before the age of 16 in Canada, in Ontario, are sexually abused by a male they know before they turn 16. We know that one in seven little boys in the province of Ontario and in the country of Canada are sexually abused before they turn 16 by a heterosexual male whom they know.

Those numbers are from my policing colleagues. Those numbers are not from the women and children we hear from every single day. You are getting the tiniest part of a funnel of a huge epidemic of harm that is global, that crosses countries and states and lines and borders, and is old, old, old in terms of ways to harm and oppress whole peoples. What you do first is, you rape women and you rape children. In doing so, many wars over successive histories have been won, and these wars are happening in the homes of the women and children who live in the province of Ontario. And I am so grateful that you are starting this conversation about that reality.

"I am 13 years old. At school, the group of boys, kind of my friends—they're in my class—they pin me down and they grab my breasts and they poked around down there. They tried to get in with their fingers. They laughed at me, then got up and went back outside for recess." We honour this young woman's experience.

"I am 32. When I was five, my father began coming into my room and fondling me. It felt good and it felt bad. My daughter is now five, and I am remembering smells, pain, shame. I am so afraid. I have panic attacks and I often struggle to go to work." We have honoured her.

"I am 36. I am a news reporter. When I do a live feed on location, for the last two years men unknown to me

have walked up, driven by, screamed out, 'Fuck her in the pussy,' laughed, and walked away." We have read about her.

"I am 45. I went to my minister for counselling. I was having a tough time with my husband always yelling and criticizing me. I wanted help to save my marriage. We ended up having an affair, the minister and me. I didn't feel like I could say no; he was my minister. I thought it was my fault." We believed her.

"I am 70 years old. I am a grandpa to two boys. They call me Papa. They are 7 and 9. When I was their age, I went to church. My priest hurt me and touched me. I hated church. I got angry. I hit my brothers. I was truant at school. I don't want that to happen to my grandchildren. I am remembering and my fists are clenched." We heard him on our crisis line.

"I am 92 years old. I live with my daughter and my son-in-law. My husband died four years ago, so I moved in with them. I am in a wheelchair, but I get around the house okay. My son-in-law sexually abuses me. I am so afraid that if I tell anyone they will not believe me; rather, will believe that I have dementia and am in need of care. I am on a waiting list for a placement in a nursing home." She lived with us for seven months.

Today, we are here to give voice to this reality that is happening in our communities. It is prevalent, it is painful and it is an incredible violation of the human spirit, mind and body, and, as a result, it necessitates a complex and profoundly compassionate response to be able to foster healing.

Sexual abuse is only one form of violence against women, girls and boys. It's intentional. It's on purpose. It's not sexual. It has nothing to do with what she wears, what she says, what's she's drunk, what she hasn't, where she walks, where we are in the world.

It is designed to take away our sense of security, safety and well-being, and reduce our ability to act in our own best interest.

It has huge effects on our spirit, on our mind and on our body, and it happens in relationships. We know the person who harms us, which makes it infinitely more complicated, more painful.

It has profound effects. Economic effects alone are huge. In the country of Canada, \$7.4 billion, which is hard for me to imagine, as I track my own little budget of less than a million—\$7.4 billion every single year in the cost to the justice system and health care for violence against women.

Take that to the province of Ontario, and you get \$2.99 billion every single year, tending only to less than 18% of the people experiencing the harm—less than 18% of the people experiencing the harm.

We all know it's about way more than dollars and cents. We know that it is about other effects that are so profound and not easy to calculate on a cost balance sheet. You have broken bones. You have bruises, burns, cuts, bites, concussions, skull fractures, internal injuries, chronic pain, miscarriage, sexually transmitted diseases, chronic genital and pelvic pain, bruising or tearing of

your vagina or anus, acute anxiety, chronic stress, flashbacks, memory loss, insomnia and self-harming behaviour, broken trust, broken spirits, depression, anger and resilience.

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Sexual abuse is complicated. It is very hard to believe and comprehend that another human being would do this to another human being. It is why this day and these meetings are so important, because this truth has to find voice from outside of the rooms and the hallways and the school places that this is happening. We are afraid—I believe profoundly—to look at our incredible capacity as human beings to cause harm to one another.

We seek answers so we try to make sense of it, and in so doing, we often blame the person who is harmed. What if she didn't wear those clothes? What if she hadn't been drunk? What if she hadn't been walking at night? What if she hadn't provoked? What if her mother had protected her from him?

The focus is always on her, always on the little boy, always on the little girl. It locates a global epidemic of sexual violence inside one individual, which is flawed at a very basic systemic level and flawed at the moment of being able to provide safety and hope to the person who needs it and to create the social change necessary to mean that, "No one gets to touch my body at any point in time without my full and complete consent."

Then we try to fix her. We try to fix ourselves as women, too, to inoculate ourselves from those who could harm us by focusing on improving our self-esteem, helping us make better decisions, reducing our risk by changing our behaviour, not walking at certain times, not being left alone in certain rooms, not going to bars, schools, home or workplaces. You can imagine the limitations if we actually followed this; I wouldn't even be able to arrive here today. The effect of this is increased shame, blame and responsibility that every woman, every girl and every boy is carrying for something that is not our fault.

The other thing it does is it creates a distance; it means it's us and them.

The invitation to this committee was to a survivor of violence or a provider of service. These distinctions are not real; they are arbitrary. There are women who provide service who have experienced harm and violence. There are women who have experienced harm and violence who provide service. There are men in this room who were boys who were harmed. There are women in this room who were harmed as girls and as adult women. When we engage in this kind of dialogue, we don't get to the why of what is behind the actual attitudes and assumptions that make this possible to happen.

Going forward, my recommendations to this committee are as follows: I hope we will continue to hear and believe, because we are at the beginning of a torrent of disclosure. We are not at the end; we are not in the middle; we are at the beginning of a torrent of disclosure. We have become tired, fatigued and start to close our ears and not hear the atrocities because they will be huge.

We must not let ourselves close our ears and our hearts. In doing that, as a man, it is highly complicated because you have to accept that there are other men in this world who have caused harm to women. This does not make you a bad person. As a woman, this is complicated because you have to accept the harm that has happened to yourself or others you love, and hold that tension of knowing that no matter what status, what class, what race, what sexuality you have, you are at greater risk for harm.

My second recommendation is: We have to be able to keep an open dialogue. By that, I'm talking about community engagement. I'm actually talking about having people who know this experience personally, intimately and in their workplaces, to do this. We are so skilled in the sector that you fund to talk about violence against women, girls and boys. We are able, we have entire programs, for community prevention, and no funding attached to them. We have services that are available that are intelligent, smart, social media-based, and open to dialogue and discussion across the age spectrum. We need to bring in those capacities and allow for that dialogue to occur because it's complicated.

A year ago in my community we set out to raise funds for a capital build. We wanted 1,000 conversations. We ended up with 134 disclosures of sexual harm in the process of the same. People just need to be asked in a moment of warmth and kindness and they open up. For those 134 women and men, it was the first time they spoke. They were there to give money to a capital campaign; they were not there for counsel. This dialogue is ready to be discussed.

I think you need to consider the same approach you would to any standard public health epidemic: You know the scope of the problem, you plan, you educate, and you track your outcomes. You will be able to see incredible, life-changing outcomes that don't just hit the province's bottom line in terms of debt and deficit, but make real changes in the lived experiences of women who are getting up every single day, going through those experiences and flashbacks, and continuing to come to meetings such as this, to hold down jobs across the province and to give back in all the ways they can to their community and their children.

Every day, there are men who come into rooms where they never think anyone will understand the sexual violence that happened to them as children, where they think if they tell they will be blamed, they will experience homophobia and they will feel less of a man.

It is a miracle that we are as decent to one another with the amount of trauma and pain that we carry.

In closing, my wish for each of you is that we continue to listen, that we hold the space open to hear together—that we not only hold our incredible capacity for human harm, but we also hold our incredible capacity for human kindness and compassion. My wish is that you think of your mom, your grandpa, your sister, your daughter, your sons and yourself, that you hold them in your heart and you recall the dreams that you have for each one of them:

a life free from violation—sexual, emotional, physical, spiritual.

You have such extraordinary power in this room. You have elected office. You have a really large budget. You have a voice. You have a Premier who has chosen to listen. You have the opportunity to literally save lives and change the futures of thousands of women, girls and boys. You have experience of your own, and you have privilege and power to exercise. We're counting on you. My thanks.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Ms. Brown, thank you very much for presenting to us. I must say, I was not part of the other committee that you had the pleasure of presenting to, but I'm almost speechless, in the sense of—very powerful information and sharing content, so thank you very much.

You referred to several things, but I know one aspect where you help in what you do every day is the children. I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about some of the programs that you're able to deliver to the children. How can we help these children as they're going through sexual violence and harassment?

Ms. Liz Brown: Your best help for children is their safe parent. Sometimes there's one; sometimes there are two. Your best help is to put all your supports around that parent.

Your other best help, in terms of the example of the 13-year-old, is to hold your schools accountable to be safe places for our children. I put my kids on a bus this morning, 10- and 12-year-old boys, and then I left St. Thomas and drove to Windsor. While they're at school today, I expect that no one is allowed to hold them down, that no one is allowed to taunt them or pull at their penis or do anything like that against their little bodies. I expect that. We need our schools to be held to the same account that we hold parents in the home for safety for their children.

What we do with the mom is we wrap our services around her so that she can continue to be the best support to that child, so that they can heal from the abuse and harm they've gone through.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: In terms of structures—we were talking about that—when you think about some of the services or the needs that your clients would have—maybe, can you expand a little bit about, from your experience, what they need most?

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Ms. Liz Brown: That's in my appendix. See, I have a really long report I'm submitting. In appendix A, it says, "Top things that are needed." The first is to restore safety. Nothing happens until safety is restored. The second is to restore connection. When we are isolated, we move to habits and ways of coping that are destructive to ourselves. There is the shame, and the blame festers. If you walk into any place where you find women and men who are homeless or any place where you find women and men who are using drugs to get through the day, you

will find women and men who have been sexually abused as children, who have experienced trauma as children, and who have not had the reconnection and the safety that would make such a difference to their lived experience.

So the first step is re-establishing safety. The second is to restore connection. The third is to help manage intrusive behaviours. The fourth is to make sure people know who is there to be able to help, and that that help is 24/7. People are confused about that. This whole language of “sexual violence” and “domestic violence” is a real problem. It started from the criminal justice system. It’s not helpful to the individual person, because we have sexual assault centres, we have women’s shelters, we have help lines, we have crisis lines. People need to know that 24 hours a day, you can call a crisis line as a woman or a man and you will get the support you need. We will make sure of that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Jones—I’m sorry. MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That’s okay. I wish she was here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I’m thinking of a different committee. I have lots of committees. MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much: very powerful. Thank you for your dedication to this very controversial topic.

What are we using wrong for the—first of all, we don’t know it’s 24/7. We’re talking about young people. Maybe it’s happening with one of their parents. How do we let them know it’s not right?

Then you inferred a bit in the last answer about the name we are calling it, and is it maybe wrong? So just take whatever you’d like and go.

Ms. Liz Brown: Well, that’s big. Okay.

To start in terms of young people, I think one of the things we really miss now is the ability to be in the schools. Our schools have changed their practices about that, so there are only certain education models that are allowed in school boards. This narrowing of that piece has meant that advocates who have experience, lived and professional, are not in the schools. When we’re in the schools as young as grade 5—I know this scares the crap out of many people—we need to be talking about the reality of our bodies and our rights to being able to have control over them.

When we start talking at grade 5, kids are not concerned; they are not worried. They are understanding, they are listening and they are open to that piece. It doesn’t increase sexual behaviour; it increases safety. We need to start there, and you need advocates like myself and my colleagues and the people who are sitting behind me to be the ones in the schools doing that with the teachers, not to expect the teachers to be able to do everything in addition, but to also bring in people with a lived and professional expertise to do so. I think that’s a profoundly huge way to assist.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you again for a very strong and thoughtful presentation.

You talked about the economic costs of violence against women in terms of policing, justice, health care, I guess lost days of employment and others. You mentioned a \$2.99-billion estimated cost a year in Ontario. There’s a strong economic argument made that investing in prevention and supports will actually cost less money because you can divert some of that funding that’s all caught up in the aftermath and do that upfront prevention.

Do you have a sense of what kind of funding should be allocated to the upstream prevention rather than these downstream costs?

Ms. Liz Brown: Yes: appendix B.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay.

Ms. Liz Brown: No, I’m joking.

I do have a belief about that. To start, when you look at the inverted pyramid and you look at the amount of sexual violence, it looks like this. By the time it gets to the justice system, it’s less than 18%. The justice system—when you look at funding, you reverse the pyramid. You have, up here at the tiny part, advocates who are able to provide sexual violence counselling and are also able to do the community engagement, and that’s the amount of the pie and the investment that’s going into prevention. Then, down here, you have the justice system investment. So we have a reverse: We have the most money going into the least-accessed point of the system. It will continue to be the least-accessed point of the system for a long, long, long time because of the shame involved, because of the blame involved and, frankly, because of many of the court outcomes that are netted after that process.

So to reverse it into prevention while still keeping the criminal justice system available, because it should continue to be recognized as a crime, is essential, but putting that money upstream, we can track that. We can track it through community-based research over time. We can even give you research over decades about how much that will save you.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Has there been research conducted that you could—

Ms. Liz Brown: No, we’re just in the process now.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay.

Ms. Liz Brown: Yes. We need funding for that, too. But you can certainly track these benchmarks. You’ve done it for early childhood education; you’ve done it for the outcomes for the under-six crowd. Once you move over six and you look at sexual violence, you can use the same tracking mechanisms to track the outcomes in this particular case. I can guarantee you will see results that are quite eye-popping in terms of savings.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We really appreciate your coming and informing this committee. It’s nice seeing you again. If you would like to—

Applause.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You're getting applause.

You may join our audience, if you wish to.

MS. FARAH EL-HAJJ

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call on our next presenter this afternoon: Farah El-Hajj. Please come forward and make yourself comfortable. You'll have up to 20 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions.

Have a seat, and for the record, begin by stating your name and if you're with an organization.

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Hello. My name is Farah El-Hajj. I am a student-at-large at the University of Windsor. I'm a student there, and I'm here to present to you to give you a student's perspective on sexual violence and harassment on our campus.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin any time.

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Okay. Like I mentioned, my name is Farah El-Hajj. I am at the University of Windsor in my third year of political science. I've been heavily involved with drafting the sexual assault policy at the University of Windsor. I was the first student asked to join the drafting committee by the dean of students because I have advocated strongly for a sexual assault policy for a few years now.

In November 2014, I was approached by four females on my campus—I'll get into that a little bit later. I'm heavily involved with the student union on campus. It was during the time of an election that they said, "It's important that we have a sexual assault policy on our campus because no other student leader on our campus has advocated for it." They shared with me their stories. They disclosed some information to me that I can't even begin to express how speechless they left me. That kind of pushed me to fight and advocate for implementing a sexual assault policy on our campus. From then on, we created a working group, and we are now still in the process of drafting the policy.

Today, I'll just go over some of the recommendations that we have as students at the University of Windsor and what we would like to see from all of you folks around the table here. But also, thank you all for taking the time to address the issue with us and for allowing the public to join and disclose some of their information and some of the recommendations that they have to make. I really thank all of you for being here today.

First of all, I think it's extremely important to create a safe space on our campus. Oftentimes, students who experience sexual violence and harassment or assault on our campus don't know where to go, where to start, where to go for help or what to do. One in five women in post-secondary education will experience sexual assault simply because they are students and because they are women. That stat is very triggering to me as a woman on campus and as a student on campus. If you look in a classroom of about 200 students—an average classroom at the University of Windsor—you're looking at anywhere between 10 to 20 students being sexually assaulted

simply because they are students at the University of Windsor.

It's important that we're creating safe spaces, and the way to do that is by providing funding. We don't have a crisis centre on our campus. Students don't know where to go when they're experiencing sexual assault and sexual violence. It's really, really important that government officials and people in power really, really push for a concrete funding resource that is offered to all universities and colleges across the province and across the country to make sure that each and every student knows what to do if they experience sexual assault on our campus.

Second of all, it's important that—and we've seen this across the country, thanks to media, because administrations have been forced to be held accountable—we're pushing for stand-alone sexual assault policies at each and every institution in Ontario and across Canada. There was a recent study done where nine out of over 100 had adequate reporting and had actual policies implemented at their institution. The University of Windsor wasn't one of those nine schools. Since then, we're working on the policy and we hope to have it done for September. That has been pretty exciting; to make sure that students know that the University of Windsor has a no-tolerance on sexual violence and sexual assaults.

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Working groups like this and select committees are really important to have across the country, across the province, even locally. I hope that this just doesn't end here. We hope that we see you folks again—to maybe come on our campus and listen to what students have to say, because it's really hard for me to represent 13,000 students by myself. It's important that we all have open ears to listen to these students and what they would like to see. I think that opens the dialogue between government officials, our representatives and students.

It's really important, as I mentioned before, that we're pushing for funding. I know that the dean of students at my university has a fear of: "We draft this policy, it gets implemented, we follow it, but there's not enough funding to make it adequately there in person." That's something that the dean of students is worried about, so you can only imagine what students are worrying about. Many of those who are involved with the work already done fear the lack of funding, that it will halt or stop the advancements we've made, that have been occurring.

It's really important that we push for mandatory reporting and having our administrations be held accountable; that if sexual assaults happen on our campus and the students decide to disclose, that that is going to be made public. At the University of Windsor, sexual assaults do occur, and we were one of the schools that had no information to report when asked how many sexual violence cases we have dealt with. A member of our administration mentioned that he dealt with four sexual assaults in a matter of five years at the University of Windsor. That is ridiculous, when one in five women experience sexual violence on our campus.

In the recent study where nine out of 102 Canadian colleges and universities had sexual assault policies, the University of Windsor wasn't one of them, but hopefully will be in the fall—so it's ensuring that post-secondary education institutions are reporting the cases for accountability and holding our administration accountable, to make these reportings public so that students are well aware and they know that sexual violence is on our campus.

I had the pleasure of meeting the Premier of Ontario in January. We sat at a round table at Queen's Park, and we discussed—for each university, there was one representative through the Canadian Federation of Students—the importance of what work has been done on our campus and what work needs to be happening. She took a lot of our recommendations and provided them to her committee, and then, from that, she started her action plan. She released her action plan in March. It was very exciting that student leaders are getting involved with government officials like you and the Premier to push and work together for creating a rape-culture-free campus and to make sure that each and every student knows that they should feel safe and secure on our campus, because each and every student deserves to.

My last point—and I really don't have too much to say, because the speaker right before me blew my mind, so it kind of took away a lot of—

Interjection: She was amazing.

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Oh, yes, she was just amazing.

Encouraging more public input—so things like these conversations, to happen around a table like this, where students like me, students who don't really have any experience with advocacy can just walk in here and voice their opinion on what has to be done and what should be done in terms of their security and their safety on our campus. Again, the stat that one in five women will experience sexual violence on our campuses across the province, across the country is triggering to me, as a woman, and to my friends and my peers at the University of Windsor and across colleges and universities in the province and the country.

In conclusion, I'll repeat my recommendations to you. Really, it's all about funding and creating mandatory consent education. I think it's important that students know that consent is something that needs to be discussed, whether at a young age or an old age. I'm not sure if folks around the table know, but sexual assault cases at the University of Windsor, at least, happen the most in the first eight weeks of every semester, because students are transitioning from high school to university and colleges and are not knowing what consent is or what's considered sexual assault—what's okay, what's not okay, and things like that—so it's really important that we're pushing for mandatory consent education from a young age and bringing that to our post-secondary institutions, as this will help to eliminate sexual assault on our campus.

Again, thank you all so much for coming to Windsor, if you're not from here. It's a beautiful city. The weather

is ugly today, but it's usually a nice city. Thank you all so much for coming and listening to me and to the other speakers. We hope that this conversation continues and doesn't just stop here and that we see actual work being done after this committee takes all the information and develops it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, Ms. El-Hajj. Some of us arrived yesterday, by the way, when the weather was very nice, so we got to enjoy that.

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Awesome.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our first questions for you are from MPP Bailey.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you very much for your presentation. I was kind of interested when you said—I just assumed that all universities and colleges, with the media interest and with so much information about sexual assault, would have some type of program in place, but you're saying that there's no safe space on campus, and also that there's no real reporting. What does the university board of directors, the dean—obviously you guys talk to them and question them on this. What's their response?

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Oh, boy.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Or do they?

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: It's really hard to get something out of them, to be honest with you. I'm very passionate; I've advocated for things from tuition fees to sexual assault, ending violence and larger topics. But I guess what happened at the University of Windsor is that the media got a little glimpse that the University of Windsor didn't have any adequate reporting, so they were forced or pushed to create a committee to start drafting the policy.

It's important that this is finally getting into the media. I mean, it's only 2015, but—it's important that these issues are being brought to light, because it's pushing administrations across the province to get involved and create committees that are working on the policies. That's exactly what happened at the University of Windsor. Reporting in the media started happening in mid-November, and then a couple of weeks later I was asked to join the committee. Since then, we've been working biweekly to develop the policy. We hope that other schools follow in our shoes and continue to work on policies like that.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I want to commend you on your work and your committee. Thanks for being here today and presenting your deputation.

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for taking the time to come today and for offering those recommendations. A couple of things: You said you're pushing to have institutions all publicly report incidents of sexual assaults on campus. One of the challenges that we've heard from institutions is on comparing apples to oranges, if there's no standardized process of capturing the data so that it can be reported so that you're reporting

the same things across campuses. In your discussions with other institutions, is this something that you are looking at, some kind of standardized reporting system that would be across post-secondary institutions, both colleges and universities, because you'd want to be accurately reporting the situation at a number of different schools?

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Honestly, it unfortunately varies from campus to campus, so it's really hard to generalize with all universities and colleges, but it's extremely important that—I know that at the University of Windsor we just finished drafting the policy. Now it's being reviewed by legal experts, but I know in ours we have a section on resources. We have a section on what is considered to be disclosure and what is considered to be reporting, because some students who experience sexual violence might want to—in the term “venting”—express it to a professor or a friend rather than disclosing it as an actual report. It's important that universities and colleges aren't pushing students that they have to report; it's up to them whether they want to.

It's really hard to set it as a scale, because each and every case is different, so it also varies, but I think what's important is that—I know at the University of Windsor we have a web alert, which half the time doesn't work. For example, not to do with sexual violence but violence in general, we had a recent case of someone who fled the border. If you notice, the University of Windsor is right down the road, and that's where the bridge is. An armed male left the border and ran through Windsor from Detroit. He could have been on our campus; we're not sure if he made his way to our campus. But students who were on campus weren't notified that there was a man who was armed on campus. It's things like that. For example, “Someone just experienced sexual assault in the student centre. If you've seen it, or if you've heard it, be aware”—just to let students know that it happens.

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I know when I speak to students and I let them know that I'm working on a sexual assault policy, they're surprised to know that sexual assault is a thing on campus. They're like, “That's a thing on campus? That happens?” That's the frightening part: that students don't even know that it's occurring.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Hi. Thank you so much. Your presentation was amazing, and it's so good to see that you're so engaged in your school community and doing so much work for your school community.

My question was around reporting. I know that you just said that it's different in every case, and it's really up to the students whether they want to report or not. In the recommendations that you're making and the policy or the plan that you're creating, how are you encouraging students to come out and report?

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: That's a great question, and we actually get asked that all the time. The best way I can put it is: Students need to gain back the trust from the

administration; that's the only way that they can report. Oftentimes, students who experience sexual violence on our campus find it unnecessary to report it because they feel like nothing will be done for them. So it's important for students to see that the administration and student leaders like myself are willing to work with them and push them to report because it might save the next person who might experience sexual assault.

It often happens in residence buildings on campus, and it's really important that RAs, residence assistants, are properly trained to deal with sexual assault cases so that students can gain back the trust to go and report. I guess when the reports start coming out, other students are encouraged to speak about it.

I heard an excellent speaker at York University a couple of months back. It took her four years to discuss how she was sexually assaulted. It takes time. It's not like it happens, and then right away students are going to disclose. So it's really, really important to create a safe campus and ensure that the relationship between students and the administration is strong and trustworthy enough for students to come out and report. The administration has a lot to work on.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Dong, you have a question also?

Mr. Han Dong: I've just got a quick question. In your experience in policy-making, can you tell me your thoughts on the fact that sometimes the perpetrator after the incident has very little change come into their life, but the victim has to maybe relocate or have these protective measures around her or him? In your policy-making, do you find that that's somewhat unfair? Are there any good ideas so we can curb this?

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: I think at the University of Windsor, in terms of our policy, it's repeated a few times that there's no tolerance at all for sexual violence and harassment. The good thing, too, is it defines what sexual assault, sexual harassment and sexual violence are considered to be.

Oftentimes, students who are committing these crimes get just a slap on their wrist, and they are let go. For example, at the University of Windsor, again, in 2009, we had a peeping Tom. There was a male resident going into a shared bathroom, and there were no curtains at that time because the University of Windsor didn't give curtains. They had a male go in and peek through the bathrooms. A woman was raped in the bathroom. It's really important that the administration work with, I guess, both parties, if you want to say that, and that they're providing support for the victim, but they're also letting the person who's committing these crimes know that this is not okay; it's not a slap on the wrist and then you get to go.

There was another instance where a woman was raped in her residence building on the sixth floor, and the male was just banned from the sixth floor, but he was allowed everywhere else in the building. Things like that happen all the time. She's going to run into him on campus. She's going to run into him in the elevator. She might run

into him in the lobby. It's just ridiculous. So it's really important that the administration is enforcing the rules once they make them and that there is no tolerance for sexual violence, no matter what the case is or what it looks like.

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. El-Hajj, thank you so much for coming here today and appearing before this committee. We thank you for your information.

Ms. Farah El-Hajj: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you, if you wish to, to join our audience.

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH
AND EDUCATION ON VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter to come forward, with the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children. Please come forward. Have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. You will have up to 20 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you.

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: Okay. Thank you. I do have some handouts.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our Clerk will get those from you.

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: I also brought a few handouts from—I was part of a group that presented previously. I got the message that I should bring 20 copies.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Great. Please give those to our Clerk, and he'll hand those out.

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: Okay. Some of those are from a previous presentation. The rest are for today's presentation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please have a seat. Begin by stating your name, and start anytime.

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: Hi. My name is Barb MacQuarrie. I'm the community director at the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children. We're located in the faculty of education at the University of Western Ontario. Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today. What I'm going to present to you might be a bit of a departure from some of what you've heard. We conducted a national survey—and we just released our results in November 2014—on the impact of domestic violence on workers in the workplace. I'm going to talk to you about that survey.

I'm here today representing, of course, my own centre and also the Canadian Labour Congress, who were a partner in the survey, and an international network called Domestic Violence at Work. I have a SSHRC—Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council—grant to put together this international network. We are a combination of academics, policy people, labour union representatives and women's advocates. We all have a common concern about domestic violence when it enters the workplace, how it shows up in the workplace and how we might

provide support through the workplace. We are from New Zealand, Australia, the US, Canada, Great Britain, Germany and the Philippines as well now, and our membership continues to grow.

We have, internationally, a growing body of evidence that shows there is actually a link between economic independence, being in paid employment and the impact of domestic violence. What we know is that women who have a history of domestic violence have a more disrupted work history. As a consequence, they have lower personal incomes, they have to change jobs more often and they're more likely to be employed in casual or part-time work.

We also know that being employed is actually a key pathway for women to be able to leave an abusive relationship. The financial security of employment prevents women from becoming trapped in violent and abusive relationships, and it helps them to maintain both their home and their standard of living.

We also know that when perpetrators extend their abuse to the workplace setting, there's an escalation in risk. They may be trying to endanger their partner's or ex-partner's employment by their harassing and stalking, but just the fact that they've decided to follow their partners to work, in and of itself, is a sign of escalating risk.

1350

It's not just victims in the workplace who have an impact. Offenders as well have an impact, and we have a very beginning body of research on this. These statistics I'm showing you here are from an American study. We are replicating this Canadian study, but we won't have our results for about another year.

This study was done with offenders who are in partner-assault response programs, so they've been convicted of assault on their partner. What they told us was that their work performance was negatively impacted as a result of the violence in their interpersonal relationships. As a result of that violence, there were things like they weren't paying attention to what they were doing; they were thinking of their partner or their ex-partner and the dispute they'd had; they were waiting for their partner to call on the phone. So their performance was being impacted by this.

Most startling is that almost 20% of them actually admitted that they had caused or almost caused an accident at work. So there's a real cost to having these domestic disputes enter the workplace, even if not physically.

We have also a growing body of research that's looking at the costs of domestic violence at work. This is the most important Canadian study that we have. It was done by Justice Canada in 2012. We know that over \$7 billion a year is the cost to our national economy of domestic violence. These costs are borne, some of them, by the victims themselves, but also by our health care system, by our criminal justice system, by our social service system. And we've been able to isolate costs to employers at almost \$78 million a year.

What I'll say about the costs is that at this point we can only count what we can measure. There's so much

that we still can't measure that the costs are quite drastically under-represented.

Now I'm going to turn to more recent surveys that have been done. These are surveys that are actually designed to look at the impact of domestic violence on workers and the workplace. The very first one was done in Australia. New Zealand followed. The UK was next. Canada was next—I'll talk to you about that—and Turkey is the most recent country to do a similar survey.

Our objective in Canada was to survey Canadian workers about their experiences of domestic violence in the workplace. Our respondents were 15 years of age and up. They were both men and women. This was, as I mentioned before, a partnership between the Canadian Labour Congress and Western University. It was funded by in-client support from Western, from the CLC, from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

We had a six-month online survey. It ran from December 2013 to June 6, 2014. Our recruitment was largely done through the CLC. We had posters, book-marks, emails, meetings. We had a media launch. It was offered both in French and English. Anybody aged 15 years and up was eligible to participate.

We had over 60 questions in our survey, so what I'm showing you today is really just skimming the surface of the data. We continue to write articles, and we have two in press.

We had over 8,400 respondents. About 78% of our respondents were female. Ontario was over-represented, as was BC. The vast majority of respondents were between 25 and 64 years of age. Over 80% were in permanent employment. Over 80% were unionized, and a lot of them were from the health care or social service sectors.

What this tells you about our survey is that these are people who actually have quite secure jobs and quite good benefits. So when you see the impact on these workers, you have to imagine what the impact is on more precarious workers who don't have the same degree of job security or the same degree of support in their workplace.

This is the definition that we used, so it's not just physical violence we're talking about; it's physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse. It includes financial control, stalking and harassment. It can occur between opposite- or same-sex partners; they may be married, common-law or living together. It can also continue to happen after a relationship has ended.

In our survey, fully one third of respondents had experienced domestic violence at some point in their lifetime. Women, transgendered and aboriginal respondents, those with disabilities and anybody with a sexual orientation outside of the norm had much higher rates. Now, ours was not a random sample survey, but our rates are very consistent with other large Canadian surveys. Both the size of our sample and the consistency with previous national samples that were random samples give our results a lot of validity.

This is just a graph showing the breakdown by gender. As you can see, though transgendered people were very small in number in terms of respondents, they were so much more likely to experience domestic violence. Then, you have women as compared to men: about 7% of women and about 4% of men currently, and just under 40% of women and just over 17% of men over a lifetime experiencing domestic violence.

Among those workers who told us that they experienced domestic violence in their workplace, almost 40% said that it has impacted their ability to get to work. I thought that it might help to have a couple of quotes so that you can hear from people in their own words:

"I would have to find a safe house because of violence at night. Then I would be without work, clothing or school uniforms for the kids."

"My children and I would be too emotionally upset to go to work and school the next day."

"Sleep deprivation affected my ability to focus at work or get there on time."

Other ways that people told us that it affected their ability to work was hiding car keys, taking transportation money, not showing up for child care, destroying work clothes and actually physically confining somebody, not enabling them to get to work.

One of the most significant findings is that amongst that one third of workers who have experienced domestic violence at some point in their life, over half said that it actually followed them to work. So what does that look like? The most common way it follows people to work: harassing phone calls. Stalking harassment is also fairly frequent. You have the abuser physically showing up at the workplace in almost 20% of the cases. These are actually quite high-risk behaviours, not just for the person being targeted, but for other co-workers and potentially clients, customers and patients as well, depending on the workplace.

Again, in respondents' own words:

"Constant phone calls prevented me from doing my job properly as it tied up the phone required for business."

"He pretended to be security and dragged me out of work."

"The abuser would phone my workplace to see what time I had left and phone when I arrived to make sure I was actually going to work."

Not surprisingly, I think, over 80% of those who experienced DV—domestic violence—admitted that it had a negative impact on their work performance. So here's just a little bit of what they said:

"I was tired and distracted, yet work was a place where I felt safe."

"Dealing with my ex-husband left me anxious, tired due to sleep—it affected the pleasure work usually gives me."

So I think you're seeing two messages here: one is that work is important to these people who are experiencing domestic violence. They want their jobs; they want to be there, but the domestic violence that they're experiencing is interfering with their ability to work.

It doesn't just impact those who are affected directly; it also impacts co-workers. We know that, amongst those who experience domestic violence again—that one third—almost 40% said that it had an impact on their co-workers as well. Here are some of the ways that it impacted their co-workers:

"People were sympathetic and horrified, but also very, very uncomfortable."

"I could see how my situation could place others in danger and was lucky that none of the threats that were brought forth were followed up."

We asked co-workers, too, whether or not they recognized that anybody they worked with was experiencing or had been experiencing domestic violence. Again, over a third—very consistent with the numbers reporting domestic violence—said that, yes, they believed that they had worked with somebody who had experienced domestic violence. One of the papers—I was just impressed now—is actually looking at the kinds of warning signs that co-workers are able to recognize. Over 10% said that they thought or knew that they had worked with somebody who was actually also using abusive behaviour.

1400

We asked whether or not those who had experienced domestic violence ever talked about it with anybody at work. Over 40% said yes, they did talk with somebody at work. Who they talked with was overwhelmingly their co-workers: 80% of those who talked to somebody talked to their co-workers. Just over 40% talked to a supervisor or manager, 12% to a union and 10% with HR. Very few workplaces have a designated person to handle domestic violence in the workplace; a few of them talked to that person.

Here is a little bit of what our respondents actually said: "Confiding in co-workers helped alleviate the stress of being attacked when going to the car, the unending phone calls, over and over and over, and the extreme fatigue, both physically and mentally."

"The support from a few co-workers and the employer psychologist was empowering."

"The gossip was malicious and not at all helpful."

We see a real difference there between an empathetic, supportive response and just workplace gossip.

We asked whether or not workers had received information from their employer or their union about domestic violence in the workplace. Remember that this survey is very heavily weighted, with almost 50% of our responses coming from Ontario, and we have legislation in Ontario that at this point, at a minimum, everyone should be getting information about domestic violence. We found that under 30% received information from their employer, and roughly the same amount received information from their union.

Here's what one of our respondents said about receiving information and support from employers. I think it's a really good summary: "We bring to work everything that happens at home. We can't compartmentalize or mentally separate these different aspects of our lives. While it might not technically be a responsibility of the

employer or union to provide shelter or assistance for employees being victimized by abusers at home, the workplace is a logical place to provide help, support and resources for victims of violence."

Finally, the most serious impact was the loss of employment. Almost 10% of our respondents who experienced domestic violence at some point said that they had actually lost a job due to the violence. This could have been because of the impact it had on their performance. It could have been because you had the abuser showing up at the workplace causing a disturbance.

Some 91% of all respondents, whether they experienced domestic violence or not, did believe that domestic violence impacts the lives of workers. A quarter of them felt that supportive policies could actually reduce the impact of domestic violence.

In summary, many workers have directly experienced domestic violence or know of co-workers who have. Domestic violence has significant impacts on the workplace. Less than a third of workplaces are providing information—we're not even talking support, just information. Workplace responses are mixed, but when in place, they were seen as generally positive.

That brings me to the recommendations I have today. These recommendations come on behalf of my centre and on behalf of the Canadian Labour Congress as well. We want to strengthen the language of the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act to make the education of managers, supervisors and workers about domestic violence in the workplace mandatory.

Secondly, we want to train and designate health and safety inspectors to check compliance with occupational health and safety obligations to take reasonable precautions to keep employees safe from domestic violence that may occur in the workplace.

I'm happy to elaborate on those recommendations. I just want to point out that I've been working for many years now, since about 2009 or 2010, on an initiative called Make It Our Business. It has a lot of resources for employers, unions, co-workers, HR professionals and health and safety professionals on addressing domestic violence in the workplace. It has been funded by the provincial government, and continues to be, so it's not as if you have to go and find resources to implement some of the recommendations that I'm putting forward.

I'm open to questions. I hope I made it my 20 minutes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. I see that you're prompting me to ask you some questions, so I appreciate that. Our first questions for you this afternoon are from our NDP caucus. It is MPP Sattler who will be talking to you. Thank you.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. For the benefit of other committee members, Barb MacQuarrie was honoured with the Order of Ontario for her leadership in domestic violence. We're very honoured to have you here, and this is great information.

A couple of questions: Number one, have you run the data by province so that we could look at the Ontario-only results and see if they differ from the national results?

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: We haven't yet, Peggy, but we will be doing that and I'll be more than happy to share that. What I would say is that you can just expect that there is an Ontario bias in all of these results because of the large numbers from Ontario.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. The next-to-final slide talked about "Make It Our Business." Your recommendation is that information for employers should be mandatory. You have had this voluntary program available that has been funded for a while—very, very robust. But how many employers are taking advantage of it? What percentage of employers would you say you've been able to reach with this voluntary process?

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: I think we've reached the very early adapters, maybe workplaces that have had some experience already and so really have opened their eyes to the need for this sort of education. I think it would be generous to say that we've reached 1% of workplaces.

Just to give you an example, because we've had funding from the Ontario government, we're able to offer our programs at either no cost or sometimes travel cost, depending on where we have to go. Recently a large corporation, which will remain unnamed, had an employee who was very interested in introducing this program and managed to get the ear of a regional manager. We were already down the road of talking about how to create customized webinars for this company. Another manager got a hold of it and said, "No way is this happening. No way is this a corporate company responsibility. If individual franchises want to do this, they're welcome to do it. There's no way we are taking on responsibility for doing this."

It's not my read of the legislation, but this is the kind of response—it's not infrequent that we get those kinds of doors slammed in our face. The only way we get into workplaces is where we have a champion, somebody who understands either the implications for the workplace or has dealt with situations and says, "We really do need help."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much for your presentation—very good statistics and very useful information. We hear a lot about how there shouldn't be a distinction between those who suffer sexual violence and those who suffer domestic violence. Can you respond to that or explain the differences between the two?

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: Sure. I tend to agree with that. I think that for different reasons historically we've kind of separated things out. I think what we need to understand is that the underlying dynamics are very similar: power and control.

I think that maybe one of the differences, potentially, between domestic violence and sexual violence is the setting and the environment in which it occurs. I'm talking about violence that happens in the home, that follows people to work. It absolutely includes sexual

violence, and sexual violence is very often a component of domestic violence. Our study wouldn't apply to settings in colleges and universities or wouldn't apply to street harassment, which encompasses that, but there's no good reason to see these as separate issues.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Okay. To follow up on that, the needs of the domestic violence survivor: Do you think they would differ very much from the needs of a sexual violence survivor?

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: If you're talking about the workplace—

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: In terms of absenteeism and affecting productivity etc.

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: I think some of the needs are very similar. First of all, there's a need not to be penalized for the fact that you've been victimized. I think that this is, at the root, what Bill 168 tried when it amended the Occupational Health and Safety Act. That was the intent: to make sure that people were more supported. I think we made some mistakes there. Having said that, our Occupational Health and Safety Act and the fact that it even mentions domestic violence is very innovative and very ahead of the curve. I don't know of any other domain that has domestic violence explicitly mentioned in their Occupational Health and Safety Act, so I do want to applaud that.

1410

On the other hand, we separated out harassment from violence. Domestic violence is seen as a form of violence, and the obligations to deal with harassment and violence are different, with a slightly higher bar for dealing with violence than harassment. Right there, I think, are some problems in terms of the support that might potentially be available to victims of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Many of the needs are absolutely parallel. First, what someone needs is a safe environment in the sense that they can actually disclose what's happened to them without negative reprisals at work. Next, they need to know that the workplace will be engaged in part of a plan to support them, and the workplace is in all instances a location through which we can safely and effectively offer supports. Some of those supports might actually look different. You might be relying on community partners to come in and help you deliver some of those supports.

I think another thing that we need to remember about the legislation—the intent was not to say to employers all of a sudden, "Now you have to become experts in sexual harassment and domestic violence." It wasn't at all, but it was to say, "Now you have to know who your community experts are and you have to start working with them." Again, that has not happened to the extent that I think it could and should.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. Excellent report. Congratulations on being a member of the Order of Ontario—well deserved.

I guess my question is really—it hasn't worked as well as you had hoped it would, that the employers would engage with their employees in more prevention. Is there some other type of carrot, as opposed to the mandatory, to make it happen? Because you're talking about diversity between small companies, big companies. Can you elaborate on that any further for us, some ideas of how to do this in a way that's positive, proactive but yet not intimidating?

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: Sure. I think that that was the intent of our national survey that I've presented to you: to show employers that there are very real costs to not addressing this in the workplace.

Ms. Laurie Scott: In numbers, for sure, yes.

Ms. Barb MacQuarrie: In numbers. I suppose that any assistance in terms of getting that information out to employers would be a good thing. I've done webinars with the Human Resources Professionals Association. I've done webinars through the Conference Board of Canada.

I think we're at the very beginning again of having employers actually grapple with this. Having a program that's available, that's high profile where there aren't costs attached, having flexibility by being able to deliver webinars if you can't get all your staff together at the same place, same time, is a good thing.

The occupational health and safety legislation does say that every workplace has to provide information and instruction. It doesn't say how that will happen, but it's just being ignored—more than being ignored; it's being actively denied. So I'm not quite sure how to break through that.

Certainly from where I sit, I'll continue to do research, I'll continue to do public education, but I honestly feel that I need the assistance and the help of government to make it clear that there are really good reasons why we're doing this. I also would say that we need the assistance of government to make sure that these programs are accessible and affordable, no matter what size business.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and appearing before this committee today. We invite you, if you wish, to sit in our audience now.

REGISTERED NURSES'
ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO,
WINDSOR-ESSEX CHAPTER

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We continue with our next presenter, and I would call forward the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Windsor-Essex chapter.

Please come forward and take any seat you see along the front here. Make yourself comfortable.

Ms. Debbie Kane: The speaker might be used to this, but this is really scary to me, and I teach classes of 500.

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to ask you to make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you like. You're going to have 20 minutes to speak to our committee. After that, it will be followed by questions from our committee. So pull the microphone right in front of you—it bends, so you can do that.

Ms. Debbie Kane: I'm usually really loud.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay.

Ms. Debbie Kane: So people usually tell me to turn the mike off.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Start by stating your name, and begin any time.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Debbie Kane, and I am a board member with the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario. I am a Windsor-grown kid. As a faculty member at the University of Windsor faculty of nursing, research into workplace wellness and harassment in the workplace is my background. So I've been doing this for many years. When the opportunity came to speak today, I said, "Oh, but I haven't received any awards like my esteemed colleagues." So again, kudos to you. All I can do is share with you what I have become aware of with my research.

The other thing I wanted to mention—part of me wondered if—my work again is in workplaces and oftentimes health care workplaces. I also had the opportunity to do a program evaluation at Hôtel-Dieu Grace hospital after Lori Dupont's death. Then I got the email this morning about, "Anything you say without permission can be used against you in a court of law," and I'm like, "Oh, my God, I can't say anything because I haven't checked with anybody," and rightly so. Privacy—you can't say things. But as a researcher, I know that. So I just sort of went through and made sure that I didn't say anything that I didn't have permission to do. My research is published, so that certainly is okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Debbie, you may certainly talk to us about some of these cases without using names.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you feel it will help you to illustrate a situation.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Okay. I also know that time is limited. Normally I get three hours to do a lecture, so I'm going to finish—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): In three hours, we're going to be in Kitchener.

Ms. Debbie Kane: I know. When they called and told me, "They're 20 minutes early; get over there," I knew that I wasn't going to get 20 extra minutes. So I'm going to just follow my script, and then I think the questions will be an opportunity for me to elaborate.

Good afternoon. I've already said that. I really do appreciate the opportunity to be here today. My academic interests, as I've mentioned, include community and population health, women's health, quality of workplace issues, workplace violence prevention, and recruitment and retention of nurses. When nurses get beaten up, they tend to leave the workplace and not come back. I'd like to provide some additional information for your con-

sideration, drawing from my experience with violence prevention program evaluations.

In spite of increasing awareness, public campaigns and legislative changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act designed to prevent workplace violence and provide a safe reporting system when it does occur, nurses continue to experience physical, verbal and sexual abuse in the workplace. In a national Canadian study of registered nurses in 2009, 42% reported experiencing physical and emotional abuse; 69% reported just emotional abuse. That was in 2009. Sadly, even in 2012, those numbers have increased. A more recent survey by the Ontario Nurses Association has revealed that 85% of ONA nurses said they experienced verbal abuse in the workplace; 54% had experienced violence in the workplace as well; 39% reported other forms of violence and 19% had experienced sexual violence or abuse on the workplace.

So we're not getting a handle on it. The reporting is going up. It may be because we are more aware of it and so we're reporting it, but we certainly have a responsibility to deal with that, thus the reason why you're all here and participating in these activities.

1420

I have several recommendations from the project that I worked with, which was a survey, focus groups and interviews with health care workers at Hôtel-Dieu Grace hospital, where a violence prevention program was implemented, asking them how they felt things were in years following up to that. Again, I heard my esteemed colleague mention that, even though things are in place, the environment isn't changing. That's certainly what the nurses told me: that, in spite of having Bill 168, there were still times that they did not feel safe to report. Nurses requested additional or enhanced training—again, I bet you've heard this all through today—to deal with aggressive behaviour from patients, family members and co-workers.

With regard to patients, nurses in high-risk areas for violence would benefit from additional training in violence risk detection and physical intervention strategies. I work with nursing students at a fourth-year level. It's very difficult to prepare someone to be attacked, be it physically or verbally.

To address aggressive behaviour or conflict with all types of perpetrators, employees requested training in verbal communication and conflict resolution. Again, it's something that we don't do very well. At the hospital, they have conflict resolution e-learning that's done at the end of a 12-hour shift. I don't know if I'm the only one honest enough to say, "Yes, I'm just going to flip through it at the end of a 12-hour shift." It's not a good time to be learning. That was another recommendation: We can't do it at the end of our 12-hour shift. Do you want me to save patients or do you want me to do my e-learning? I'm saving patients. How we offer it—if we say we value it, we really have to do it at a better time than the end of a 12-hour shift.

In an effort to create a safe and respectful workplace, employees suggested training on ways to promote a

healthy workplace beyond just conflict resolution. They included bystander interventions. I know that we have procedures in place for that, but very few feel skilled at being able to intervene when they're the bystander.

Regarding the reporting process, fears of experiencing reprisal or retaliation for reporting incidents of violence and harassment negatively influenced how nurses reported violent behaviours. Respondents' recommendations for improvements were similar to those for the general reporting processes in that they wished the process were more visible and equally applied to all groups, including physicians and nurse managers. It's not okay that the nurses have to follow a procedure, but not other people who might be seen as at a higher place in the hierarchy.

Specifically, three recommendations based on the work that I completed: Although the Occupational Health and Safety Act does include wording prohibiting reprisal by an employer, explicit and strong language to protect whistle-blowers concerned about incidents or potential incidents of violence and harassment and other threats to the health of the public would strengthen our health care system.

The Ministry of Labour should review the Occupational Health and Safety Act to include safety from emotional or psychological harm, rather than just physical or implied physical harm, as part of the mandate.

As part of strengthening health outcomes, quality of health care services, inter-professional care and addressing power imbalances, we advocate—

Interruption.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Maybe that was my 15 minutes.

We advocate amending the Public Hospitals Act to replace medical advisory committees with inter-professional advisory committees.

On a broader term, I also felt the need to also mention the whole premise of the meetings, in that it's not okay. This was identified in some of the transcript documents that I was reading, the whole changing of the culture in health care—we hear all the time that the patient didn't mean to do it. But the person still got thrown across the room. The person is still never returning to work. So the culture that it's not okay to have violence against employees really needs to be believed. We need to change the belief that it's okay, that in nursing it's okay if someone smacks you in the head, because they didn't mean to.

It's not an easy thing. When I started at the university 25 years ago, I went to a presentation on violence in nursing, and I remember the person saying, "Well, we just have to start suing people." And I thought, "You can't do that. They don't mean to hit you." It's 25 years later; we still have nurses being physically abused and never returning to work because of the abuse. You also don't get patient care, by the way. When you tell someone—even verbally abuse them, I guarantee you're not getting the best care that you deserve afterwards. It impacts our whole health care system, and we really need to do something about it.

The other thing—because I've been doing work also on the gender disparities in nursing and how is it that in

nursing we can't get more males in nursing. In engineering it's gone up—in medicine it's 50-50, but we're still at about 7% males in nursing. I know that today is about women and violence against women, but I'm just going to throw this out there—so 20 years from now, when you're saying, "Where did I hear that?"—that what's happening, and our surveys are showing us, is that in nursing men are being given the most violent patients. They are reporting more incidents of violence in the workplace in terms of nursing than the female nurses, because they're given the most violent patients. We can't say that we want a more diverse workplace and then put our male colleagues in the most violent behaviour. I'm just going to throw that out there, because I know that that's not the focus, but when we're looking at changing violence in the workplace, we have to make sure that it's not a band-aid, that we're not just replacing who gets hurt.

That actually, I'm going to say, is it. So if there are questions?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have questions for you, I'm sure.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Kane, you are in very good company, because we have several nurses that are sitting on this committee. Raise your hand if you're a nurse. There you go.

Our first questions for you are going to be from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I'm still a registered nurse.

Thank you very much for coming. You speak the truth. I can name you, time and again, situations where patients were violent, either sexually or physically. We, as nurses, were told that they didn't mean it etc., etc. And our male colleagues—you are quite right—do get the most violent ones, because physically they're of the size; and still in our society, our older clients who are violent respond better to the male authority—no matter what position they hold—rather than the female. That's systemic in the root causes of some of the sexual violence.

I'm interested in a few questions. Certainly, I have been victim of not only a sexual assault, minor as it may have been, at one time and also from patients. I suspect that the more inexperienced nurses certainly have more issues. I'm interested in that whole theme of, how do you reconcile patient care and the employees' safety and rights in some of these cases? Do you have some suggestions on that?

Ms. Debbie Kane: So patients' rights—

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Meaning right to care. How do they get the care and how do you reconcile that with the fact that they're violent and employees are getting hurt because of them? Because it's often not just one incident, as we know.

1430

Ms. Debbie Kane: Right. I'm going to draw from one of the things where I did the evaluation. They had the flagging system where someone had a purple band on them if they were assumed to be violent—not assumed;

usually there had been a violent incident, so they were marked. I did an evaluation of that, and the nurses said, "We're not going to identify them as violent because they didn't mean to and they have a right to care." So I think what we need to do better is—of course everyone has a right to care.

There was an amazing conference I went to on violence in the workplace specific to nursing. One hospital, a mental health hospital in the States—I want to say in the New Hampshire area—didn't have one violent incident. This was highly acute mental health, psychiatric patients. It came down to being well prepared, being able to identify when someone is escalating and ensuring that it's a safe environment, that the patient gets the care they deserve and that the nurse is safe. I know it can be done because there are amazing institutions in our country that are doing it, so we need to spend more time. I don't mean educating the nurse in school because, as much as we're trying to do that, once you get into the workplace you have to continue to get that education because you might not have an incident with a violent patient for 10 years.

In my early days, the only time I had a truly violent behaviour was a 16-year-old with a medical condition that made her confused, and she bit me. This was a long time ago, when you could put restraints on. I'm the one who took the restraints off because I felt so bad for her, and she bit me. I was a brand new nurse and there could have been other ways to do it. Many institutions don't even use restraints anymore and they still don't have violent behaviour.

I guess I'm beating around the bush. It's not something that I could say in this five minutes, but there absolutely are ways to ensure that the patient gets the quality care and the nurse is safe, but it needs a lot of ongoing education and preparation in the health care setting.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Scott.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Scott. I'm sorry; I'm fighting a cold right now and I'm not firing on all cylinders.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Poor thing. We can diagnose you and treat you later. We're nurses.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I know I'm in good hands.

Ms. Debbie Kane: It's the allergies. I bet you're not from Windsor, are you?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): No.

Ms. Debbie Kane: The minute you enter our air.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Oh, really?

Ms. Debbie Kane: Yeah.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. Well, there you are. Something more we learned today.

Thank you for coming and presenting. It's very hard to eliminate—you just deal with patients. It depends, right? Emergency rooms, critical care, things that happen—absolutely, there are better ways to handle it; sometimes you don't see it coming, right?

Ms. Debbie Kane: Absolutely.

Ms. Laurie Scott: So it's very difficult. You mentioned the co-workers and enhanced training, not being a bystander maybe for, I'll say, co-workers. You mentioned the education that needed to be there. How prevalent do you find that is, harassment—physical, emotional—with each other, co-workers? Expand a little bit more on that, if you have a few minutes.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Worker to worker.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Worker to worker—nurses, doctors, whatever, but workers.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Right. I say that with the preface that—there's an old saying that nurses eat their young. I really hate that saying.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's really for political parties, but okay.

Ms. Debbie Kane: I rest my case. In every profession, that can happen. There's also research that shows that it isn't just nursing; it's the helping professions, where you have females that are considered caring but maybe are not as bright and assertive as other colleagues. And so in nursing and education, those individuals have been identified as having more the bullying and the nastiness between each other. But again, it's not unique to nursing. Part of that is, when you don't have a sense of empowerment in your workplace, you may find that you go after your colleague. You have to have managers. So when we talk about managers dealing with violence in the workplace, it starts with something as simple as that nasty behaviour.

There is more and more literature now about incivility—and I can't help but think I know some of you guys deal with that every day—that should not be happening, especially when we talk about a caring profession. How do you go in and care for a patient when you've just stabbed your colleague by withholding information so they can't do their job well—gossiping, nastiness? That is how it can start. When individuals start with the incivility, bullying and, again, just the nastiness, that can elevate.

I know that there is much more research being done now differentiating between what is incivility and what is actually violence in the workplace. Some of the postal worker historical incidents are where they have felt—talk about stereotyping, when we say someone has “gone postal.” It's a stereotype, but the idea is that you feel betrayed, you feel there's no one you can trust, and so you end up lashing out.

What happened to Lori Dupont is so horrible. I actually have students now who say they don't know who she is. No one who is in my class ever graduates from the University of Windsor without knowing who Lori Dupont is and the outcome of that incident and Bill 168 and that you have a right to be safe in the workplace.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: That's exactly the question I was going to ask. You mentioned that you were involved in an evaluation of the practices that were put in place at

Hôtel-Dieu in the aftermath of Lori Dupont's murder. I wondered if you could talk about some of the findings of that evaluation and some of the gaps, perhaps, in the practices, or some of the promising findings that should be applied in other workplaces.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Much of what I found was not much different than the recommendations as a result of the inquest. The evaluation was actually funded by the Ministry of Health, the nursing secretariat. It was obviously a very difficult time, because as an outsider, I am there trying to do an evaluation, while they're just trying to survive. But there are things that came out; for example, that review committees—when we're talking about reporting processes, it has to be more than just the physicians at the top of a hierarchy. You need committees that consist of a diversity of individuals; not just medicine, not just nursing—social work, nutrition, staff, dietary. You need a combination of individuals.

What was interesting to me: Individuals felt no safer after the program was implemented; as many felt safe after as had felt safe before—but it did indicate that it was a different group, possibly depending on where you worked, how involved you had been. But in terms of looking at, “Do you feel safe now that there's a reporting system in place?”—the code white was intensified, but that was also identified in the inquest. Code white wouldn't have mattered. It happened in seconds.

I had a couple of nurses share with me. One was sexually assaulted by a patient. She said, “I am at the end.”

Are you from Windsor?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm from London.

Ms. Debbie Kane: Okay. Well, I've been lost in the bowels of London Health Sciences Centre, so it's not that different.

A patient had her cornered in the bathroom and was sexually assaulting her. She had a—you know what the PAL is, the code white. It was too late. She had already been assaulted by the time anybody got there, because it takes seven minutes to run from one end to the other. This elevator only goes here and that elevator only goes there, so there are instances. Now, the nurses tell me that it is safer today than it was 10 years ago. They do feel safer about it.

The reporting process, to me, is one of the things we can do something about. That's really critical, that you feel safe if you've had a violent abuse incident, be it sexual, physical, verbal: that you can report it and know it will be treated respectfully and you won't be retaliated against.

Some felt the follow-up was too quick: “Well, I had to think about it.” What that actually tells us is that we need a better support system for those who are reporting, because once they have time to listen to their colleagues who tell them, “She didn't mean it,” “He didn't mean it,” or “Oh, he's the nicest doctor in the world. He didn't mean it”—one young student said to me that he nibbled her neck. I'm like, “What do you mean, he nibbled?” “Well, he was goofing around” and kind of kissing her neck, and I'm thinking, “I'd have hit”—is this on tape?

Interjection: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Kane, on that note, we will say thank you very much for coming and appearing before this committee today. You've provided some very interesting information for us.

And thank you to everyone here in the committee room. Committee members, thank you for all of your work. We stand adjourned until 8 a.m. tomorrow morning in Kitchener-Waterloo.

The committee adjourned at 1442.

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Mercredi 20 mai 2015

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE
ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

**COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE
ET DU HARCÈLEMENT
À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL**

Wednesday 20 May 2015

Mercredi 20 mai 2015

The committee met at 0800 in the Crowne Plaza Kitchener-Waterloo, Kitchener.

**STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good morning, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. I would like to welcome the presenters who are here with us today and any guests who are here along with you.

Let me share with you the mandate of this committee as we start. We are here to listen to your experiences as survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. However, I do want to stress that this committee does not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

We welcome you.

UNIFOR

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would ask that our first witnesses come forward, from Unifor.

Committee members, I'd also like to remind you today that we have a full schedule and we have gone to the 20-minute schedule.

Presenters, you will have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and you will be asked some questions by our committee members. Our questions need to be very concise today. Please start by stating your names and your organization and begin any time.

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Good morning. My name is Lisa Kelly. I'm the director of the women's department for Unifor. I'll talk to you in a minute about who Unifor is.

Mr. Bill Gibson: Good morning. My name is Bill Gibson. I'm the area director with Unifor here in Kitchener-Waterloo.

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Unifor is Canada's largest private sector union. We have 305,000 members from coast to coast to coast. Our members really range in every occupation and every economic sector across Canada. We

come together several times a year in different forums to learn from one another about the issues that are going on.

I'd like to thank the members of the committee for this invitation to come and address this very important issue and lend some of our observations and some of the practices that we've developed within the union that have come from our experiences and the voices of our members.

If I asked each of you to close your eyes and think of a union member, I think that the majority of people would likely have a white male, maybe middle-aged, blue-collar worker in their mind. It might surprise you that a number of years ago, the women in unions in Canada tipped so that they outnumber men in unions in Canada. The unionized workforce is now predominantly women. Part of that has to do with the collapse of the manufacturing sector. In Kitchener-Waterloo, outside of London, we'll all have some experience with that.

We've got many female leaders in our workplaces who have come forward with their experiences that will inform our submission today. I know that you've received our submission. I'll just highlight a few things, and then we're going to try to focus our submission today on something fairly particular, which is the workplaces that we represent that either are open to the public, or are things like health care, where you are dealing with people in a home-like setting, either as home care workers or in long-term care.

You're going to hear from many, many people through your time about the aftermath of sexual assault, sexual violence and sexual harassment. We want to keep trying to bring your focus to prevention, as well.

In workplaces, the employer has a really important role in setting the tone of the workplace and in using the rules that the Legislature has put together in making a respectful workplace and a workplace that's open for men and women equally.

We want to emphasize that around sexual assault, sexual violence and sexual harassment it does skew towards women of colour, women with disabilities, LGBTQ women—I guess I have to skip the G in there. So we are looking at all the ways that the intersections of people's lives increase the potential of them being victims of sexual assault, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Some of the highlights that we want to bring to you are things like our women's advocate program, our violence-against-women language, our joint investigation and anti-harassment training, as well as our employment equity reps. Before we get there, we want to talk about some of the problems that have been highlighted and that we've experienced within our workplaces.

We were one of the groups that was really active in bringing the Occupational Health and Safety Act amendments to bear—the Bill 168 amendments. We're quite happy that those happened but disappointed in the actual experience, in that they have not made the changes that I think we were all looking for and the changes that were focused by the deaths of Theresa Vince and Lori Dupont. There were inquiries into that. There were recommendations that came out of that and a lot of energy galvanized around changing the Occupational Health and Safety Act. But in reality, we haven't seen a huge difference. We have the Human Rights Code, which prohibits sexual harassment. Now we've got some health and safety language there, but we are still finding that there's a level of harassment and sexual violence in workplaces that is unacceptable.

I'd like to turn it over to Bill Gibson, who oversees health care as well as other workplaces in this area, to give you a little bit of maybe a change of some of the stories that you've been hearing when we talk about working with patients, working with clients and working with the public.

Mr. Bill Gibson: Thank you very much, Lisa, and good morning, committee. I too am very, very happy to be here and thrilled with the government initiative to take up such an important issue here at this particular time. Again, as Lisa has indicated, my assignment—a great deal of it, apart from being a director here in Kitchener—is also the health care assignment. I represent Grand River Hospital and St. Mary's hospital, plus a number of long-term-care and retirement homes.

I particularly want to focus on sexual harassment and violence in the workplace as it relates to health care environments. I want to say this very carefully, because we completely endorse and are completely happy with the fact that the province has developed a residents' bill of rights. We think this is a forward-thinking approach for the protection of seniors who are living in homes other than their home. But what it does is it creates a perception of power.

I can just relate to you a short story about a particular workplace where we had a president of a residents' council who, over the years, had continually assaulted young PSWs—personal support workers—in the workplace by fondling, inappropriate comments, patting—a number of the things that in the public realm would be reprehensible. Yet the perception of power—and his articulation to these younger workers was that he had a great deal of power in the home, that he had a great deal of property, for lack of a better term—created an environment with the workers that allowed this to go on for a great period of time, out of fear.

So where I want to go from there is the joint investigation piece that we would like to put forward here. Bill 168 was a tremendous piece of legislation, but there are a number of holes in it. When we get situations like this, it's imperative that both parties have a joint investigation. I'll tell you why: Quite simply, when there is a one-sided investigation paid for by the employer, it lends itself to bias. Now, we could challenge that bias in front of an arbitrator, but that often is a long, drawn-out procedure that sometimes takes years to have adjudicated, and all the while that worker is in limbo. So that is one piece of this legislation that we would really like to see beefed up in terms of mandatory participation on joint investigation where there is a union present in the workplace.

0810

The other issue, too, is with respect to education. There has got to be more—whether it's enforced or whether it's mandated, whatever the venue is—joint training on how to spot these types of issues. Because, again, it's a control issue for an employer, from our perspective. They don't want to let the public know that these issues could even arise in a workplace. Part of the reason for that rationale is, really, an attempt to sell their business. That's what it comes down to, especially with for-profit operators. We believe that there are a good number of well-meaning, well-intentioned for-profit operators out there, but it does lend itself to making sure that the bottom line is protected. In terms of a young worker in a workplace who could carry the scar around with them for a great deal of time, it's just something that's not appropriate.

We in our union have seen over the years the deaths of two health care workers because of intimate partner violence. Again, when you see a perception of power out there with respect to somebody, for instance, a physician, who has free rein of the workplace and there's no actual ability to track what this particular individual is doing—there are a lot of holes and a lot of opportunities for the predator-type behaviour you may see in those types of situations.

We're thrilled that we're here today discussing this important issue. We represent over 22,000 health care workers in Ontario; the predominant total of those are women. Again, this is something that they cry out in silence for some assistance with, and we thank you for being here today with this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Ms. Lisa Kelly: I just want to then pick up on that to talk about some of the other elements that are particular to health care and particular to the women who are working there: that is, working with patients who have dementia, working with others who might otherwise be excused from their behaviour in terms of not having the cognitive ability or recognition of what they're doing. That doesn't change the experience for the health care worker. If you're being grabbed or fondled or propositioned, it may be that that person doesn't know what they're doing or doesn't really intend to do what they're

doing, but your experience coming to work every day and thinking that that's going to go on is still something that's got quite a big impact.

We have one example that we've put in our brief where the person did have a history of sexual violence in their life—they were a survivor of sexual violence—and this actually triggered them. It was not being dealt with by the employer, and they wound up having to leave their employment to go on stress leave. That is something that is particularly, again—and the whole range of things that you're dealing with, which are quite complicated—difficult for health care workers working with those with dementia.

The other thing that Mr. Gibson mentioned that I think is important is looking at vulnerable workers. Within health care we have a lot of young women who work. Age isn't necessarily a signal of whether or not you're vulnerable, but it does often speak to how much security you have in your employment. So I want you to keep in mind, when you're listening to people's stories and thinking about this issue—that you're also thinking about, "What are the things that we're doing in society to strengthen or weaken people's ability to resist and to speak out about what's going on?" And I would put right on the table things like temporary foreign workers, precarious work and other things like that. If you are already feeling vulnerable around your income security, you're unlikely then to name that something is going on if you don't feel that it's going to be investigated, treated seriously and taken on.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Okay. In terms of some of our examples, the Women's Advocate Program started in 1993. I think you've heard a little bit about it. We have 329 of them now across Canada. They've made a tremendous difference in women being able to seek out other women in the workplace for help. We've negotiated violence-against-women language, where if you are trying to escape domestic violence or intimate partner violence, you will have your job protected while you are seeking shelter. The joint investigation and anti-harassment training, you've heard a little bit about, and we've negotiated employment equity representatives in many of our workplaces that have assisted in the very serious issues of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We're going to give you some questions now. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing here today. You made some good suggestions. I have a short period of time, so I'm going to be kind of direct; I apologize for that.

You brought up the long-term-care sector. In Peterborough, we had the issue of Camille Parent. It's quite out there in the news; it was on W5. His mother was abused. He had hidden cameras; he captured it. I know Camille personally. The workers were initially fired. They are unionized. I'm not going to tell you the union,

because I just can't remember off the top of my head; you might know it. His frustration is that they are back at work.

Now, the incident occurred at St. Joseph's at Fleming. I just want a comment about—it was on video; it was captured. In my opinion, those workers that abused his mother should not be back in the workplace, any workplace. I don't know if you know that issue, and I'm sorry I have a short time and I'm very blunt, but there you are.

Mr. Bill Gibson: Thank you for your question. I am familiar with the incident. What we're about is due process. Quite clearly, once a grievance is filed, it becomes property of the union. The union is required under the Labour Relations Act to do its due diligence in terms of investigating and not being arbitrary, discriminatory, or acting in bad faith.

I can't speak to the specifics of the investigation here because I'm not privy to them, but if there is overwhelming evidence that there was a violation, the union is well within its rights to act accordingly and not pursue the grievance. But the union's duty of fair representation is, first of all, to file that grievance and to make sure that all the relevant facts are out, open.

Quite clearly, we do not condone any abuse in a workplace. We cannot speak out of both sides of our mouth that way.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus. MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for coming and your presentation here this morning.

Last week at Queen's Park, we had a presentation from some lawyers who talked about the distinction made in the Occupational Health and Safety Act between sexual harassment and violence and the challenges that this creates because it separates those two issues. I wondered if you could talk a little bit about your experience. Has this been an issue for you in terms of pursuing issues of sexual harassment in the workplace?

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Again, I think we need to keep in mind the continuum that happens around sexual harassment and sexual violence. Within sexual harassment, I also would say that the Human Rights Commission and Human Rights Tribunal have recognized gendered harassment—that we often just think of it as being sexual in nature, but it is that gender continuum of thinking of feminine characteristics as being less, as being not worthy, that there's a power over people who are feminine or female.

So I would say that there is attention paid to violence, and not as much in terms of harassment under health and safety. Our main experience is that, without a real threat of an inspector coming to do anything, it's paper. Employers have quickly learned that they don't really need to pay attention to it. It hasn't been a great tool. It hasn't fulfilled its promise, for certain.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. I'm going to go to the question myself. So what are some of the best practices that you would like to bring forward to see adopted?

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Certainly, again, we've put in our brief some language that could be put in around the Occupational Health and Safety Act to make sure that the inspectors have the power, the funding and the training to enforce that. Ideally, in the long term, we would like to have a joint investigation process written into the health and safety act, and a women's advocate. I know that that's beyond what the proposals are right now, but we are very heartened at the breadth of the approach of the action plan, the fact that it's starting with consent curriculum right up to workplace and survivor support. So if we're focusing just on workplace, those would be the three: Strengthen Bill 168; put in a joint investigation process that involves the union or, if not, worker representatives; and have a women's advocate in each workplace in Ontario.

0820

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Kelly and Mr. Gibson, thank you both very much for coming and informing our committee today. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT CENTRE OF WATERLOO REGION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter: Sara Casselman, with the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region. Come forward, please. Good morning, Sara. It's very nice to see you. Please have a seat and make yourself comfortable. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Begin anytime, and start by stating your name.

Ms. Sara Casselman: Good morning. My name is Sara Casselman. I am the public relations and operations manager at the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region. Thank you so much for inviting me to speak this morning. I've been looking forward to this opportunity to share and then also just to hear from others in our community and surrounding communities on this issue. I'm also really delighted to see so much representation from Waterloo region here: obviously, Daiene, and also Catherine and Kathryn. Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Don't forget Mike. There's Mike.

Ms. Sara Casselman: Oh, I'm so sorry. Wow. Everyone is here. I wasn't expecting so much representation, but I'm very happy to actually see so many.

I just want to talk a little bit about our centre. We've been a key resource for survivors of sexual violence in Waterloo region for 26 years. Since 1990, our core funding has come from the province of Ontario. We offer free, confidential services to people and their families who have experienced sexual violence. We provide individual and group counselling, a 24-hour support line,

and assistance navigating court, police and medical processes. We're also committed to preventing sexual violence through public education and social justice work.

Our centre is a member of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, also known as the OCRCC. I know that as members of the select committee, you're travelling across Ontario and you've heard and will hear from many of our sister organizations, as well as those directly representing the OCRCC.

In preparing for today, I really wanted to think about what I could share that you won't have heard. I hope that you do gain something new, but more importantly, I hope to reinforce the messages that our sister centres are sharing across the province, because their voices are really valuable.

I can't stress this enough: The expertise of survivors themselves, such as Dianne, who's scheduled to speak next, and those working in community-based sexual assault support centres across the province, many who will speak later today, should be at the heart of the province's plan. We are on the ground dealing with this issue every day.

Further to this, the voices of women from marginalized communities, such as indigenous women, disabled women, immigrant and refugee women, lesbian, bisexual and trans women, need to be prominent in these discussions about sexual violence. While sexual violence knows no cultural or social bounds, we know that marginalized women are often victimized at much higher levels. For instance, we know that indigenous women are five times more likely than other Canadian women to be killed as a result of violence. Given this, they need to lead strategies to address sexual and gender-based violence against them.

Sexual assault centres work with survivors in all their diversity. We know that, on average, only 10% of survivors report to police. This means that 90% of survivors do not engage our criminal justice system. We serve the 10% and the 90%. We serve those who were assaulted in adulthood as well as those who experienced child sexual abuse. Today I want to amplify the voices of those survivors.

This year, we all know that sexual violence has been in our nation's and our province's consciousness like never before with Ghomeshi and Cosby and many other high-profile cases making the news. The prevalence of and response to sexual assault on our college and university campuses has been highlighted in the media. A few weeks ago, a scathing report on the Canadian Armed Forces and a culture of sexual violence was released. And again, just this past week, the issue of female reporters facing sexual harassment in our communities has made international headlines. I believe this is a crucial time for the anti-sexual violence sector. Although the problem is not new, people are listening now. It's time we address this issue, and it's time for change.

On March 6, when the province laid out its plan to move forward with the new Sexual Violence Action Plan, I was impressed by the bold stance our government took

on this issue. As someone who has been working in this sector for 13 years, I was shocked and amazed when I heard our Premier speak of rape culture, misogyny, power and control being at the root of sexual violence.

I won't spend too much time framing the issue as systemic and pervasive and rooted in constructions of dominant masculinity, because I believe it has been established, and I know there are going to be many who are addressing this today. What I'd like to share in the time that I have are just a few key points, some of which I can expand on and some of which I can't due to time constraints.

The first point I just want to speak really briefly on is our criminal justice system. As I've already said, less than 10% of survivors access this system, for a variety of reasons. Of every 33 sexual assaults reported to police, only three result in a conviction. Again, I know Dianne, who's speaking next, will be addressing this issue as well.

Obviously, our criminal justice system needs work. We need to look at attrition rates and discover at what point cases fall off the system. We need to look at cases labelled "unfounded" by the police—and if you're not familiar with the term, that's basically classing something as "a crime has not taken place."

In your travels, you may hear about a model developed in Philadelphia to annually review all sexual assault cases labelled unfounded. I'm not an expert on this model, but I do know it has been supported by Human Rights Watch and it is worth looking into. It's likely that the executive director of the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre will speak to this model in depth when you're in her community.

We need to develop enhanced prosecution models to improve the experiences of survivors, including having specialized training for crown attorneys. And, yes, we need to provide free independent legal advice to sexual assault survivors. I understand that the plan with the new Sexual Violence Action Plan is to have a pilot project of this. I'd also like to offer that many other survivors need legal advice as well, as only a minority of cases proceed to trial.

All that said, I challenge you to consider how our resources are allocated, given that 90% of survivors are not accessing this system. What services are most needed in our communities?

That brings me to my second point: Education and public discussion on sexual violence is critical. It supports prevention.

Before I address that, I just want to say that we certainly support the new sexual education curriculum and discussions around consent, online sexual violence, and healthy versus unhealthy relationships.

More broadly, education on sexual violence, including information on myths, misconceptions and attitudes informed by misogyny, goes a long way towards prevention. Public education promotes a focus on prevention of sexual assault, as opposed to catching and imprisoning offenders. The goal is to see less victimization in the future, not to build bigger prisons.

Public education contributes to creating a climate where survivors are actually safe to disclose their experiences without being shamed, blamed and doubted. Unfortunately, if Cosby and Ghomeshi taught us anything, it's that myths around sexual violence are alive and well. We've heard over and over this year—one case in particular—that women regularly lie about being assaulted. There's a misconception out there that false allegations of sexual assault are a common problem. In fact, they make up about 2% to 4% of reports, no different than any other crime. It's far, far more likely that a woman would never disclose or report her experience than it is that she would lie about it.

Sexual assault centres across the province provide public education in their communities and have incredible expertise in this area. We encourage the province to continue making funding for these programs a priority and to enhance centres' capacity to reach more of their communities.

I just want to take a moment to highlight a unique program we have in our public education department here in Waterloo region. You should have the brochure in front of you. It's called Male Allies Against Sexual Violence, or MAASV for short. In 2008, we were the first sexual assault centre in our province to develop a program to engage men as allies in the work to end sexual violence against women and children. Some other centres are now in the midst of developing similar programs in their own communities and searching out funds for this work. At 9 a.m., you're going to hear from Judah, who is one of our volunteers in this program, so I won't go into it too much right now other than highlighting it as innovative and an important component of the work that we do.

0830

My third point is around funding Ontario's sexual assault centres and other support services adequately, so we can better respond to sexual violence in our communities. I'd like to preface this point by sharing our appreciation to the province for the funding that has been provided to sexual assault centres. I believe we can hold that appreciation while also laying out the needs of centres. Simply put, funding for services has not kept up to meet the growth of population or inflation for many years, and we're seeing the impact of that.

I'd like to use our community as an example. With a population of 570,000, Waterloo region has been one of the fastest-growing urban areas in the province for many years. We're also incredibly diverse, with one in four of our residents being born outside of Canada. Last year, I crunched some numbers to better explain the funding shortfalls we're facing. Using the Bank of Canada's inflation calculator and considering our community's growth, I calculated that we're now operating with 60% of the per capita funding that we did 20 years ago.

Because of this, waiting lists for our services have crept up in recent years, and as of yesterday, in our community there were 29 women and two men waiting for counselling. A few years ago, that number reached an

all-time high of 45 survivors waiting. In response, we poured our fundraising and donation revenue into our counselling programs, and we've launched a concerted effort to find additional core funders. A number of other centres in our province are in similar positions.

I asked one of my colleagues, Tamara—she's a counsellor in our counselling department—what she wanted to communicate today. She said that in a time of searching for efficiencies and models of standardization, she's worried that she'll eventually see a model where survivors are only offered, say, 12 counselling sessions and then they're sent on their way. I'm worried about that, too.

Right now, our funding allows flexibility to meet the individual needs of survivors. Many only receive 12 sessions of counselling, but others, including those who have been impacted by multiple assaults over many years—many survivors of childhood sexual abuse—may need longer-term support. This kind of support can be life-changing, and it's sometimes the difference between life and death. The fact that we can offer this is one of the most valued aspects of the work that we do, and many survivors would be in a very different place in our communities if they didn't have access to this kind of support. Again, I know that Dianne will be speaking to this when she speaks next.

Just a few final points: In order to really address sexual violence, we need to shift the conversation away from reporting issues alone. The focus should not be on encouraging women to report; it should be on creating communities where they're actually safe to do so—safe because public attitudes have shifted and they're not shamed, blamed and doubted when they disclose their experiences; safe because they have access to timely expertise and support in their community; and safe because they won't be revictimized by the systems we have set in place. These are the kinds of changes that will help survivors who do not engage in formal reporting structures, as well as those who do.

I wish there was one thing I could sit here and tell you we need to do to actually make change on this issue, but the solution needs to be multi-pronged. I do believe, from reading the Sexual Violence Action Plan, that the province actually understands that this is not a simple issue and that we need to come at it from many different ways.

If history tells us anything, it's that systemic change and cultural shifts on human rights issues are entirely possible.

Thank you for your commitment to consultation with stakeholders today, and we look forward to continuing to work with you throughout this process.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Sara. The first question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Sara. First, I want to commend you on the male allies program. It has gotten provincial attention for good reason, because it is a model to go forward on.

I do appreciate you raising the issue around funding, because obviously you need the resources to help the people. You referenced specifically a needs-based funding model, for instance, because there's no cookie-cutter model of funding based on the needs of clients. Is there a jurisdiction that actually has put what you would regard as a progressive funding model in place, so that this committee could look at that?

Ms. Sara Casselman: A jurisdiction like another province or a state?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Or a state, yes.

Ms. Sara Casselman: I'm not aware. I do know that in Ontario we actually have more services than some of the provinces across Canada, but the need is so much greater and our population is so great in our community. I'm sorry I don't have an answer.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Okay. I'm not looking for a dollar figure either—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sorry. I'm going to have to move on to the next question.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks a lot, Sara.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Sara, for coming. It's great to see you again. You've done some great work over the years.

One question I have is, what do you think is the root cause or one of the root causes or some of the root causes of sexual violence and harassment in our community?

Ms. Sara Casselman: Sexual violence, for the most part, is around power and control. You know, you hear about someone losing control and assaulting someone, but in fact sexual violence is a means of control. So a lot of it—often, it's a gender issue in terms of men and the issue of masculinity and how they look at femininity and the need to have power and control.

So when we're doing prevention programs like our Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program, it's a really positive program that actually encourages men to adopt different kinds of—to look at diverse emotions and to not need to look at men in terms of being in a position of power and control over women. But that's certainly the root. Anything that we do to actually improve women's position in our society has the impact of reducing sexual violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks, Sara. You mentioned that 90% of women don't access services because of lengthy court delays as one of the points, perhaps. We've got a mega courthouse here in the region of Waterloo. You probably speak with—

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Oh, come on.

Mr. Michael Harris: Eleanor, please let me get the question out before you make judgement. When talking with your colleagues across the province, are we doing things better here because of the new courthouse, in the way we handle victims and support services that could be

replicated across the province, perhaps? I'm not sure you can speak to that.

Ms. Sara Casselman: Yes. I would just say that 90% of survivors don't come forward, but it's not necessarily because of long wait times in courthouses.

Mr. Michael Harris: It could be a factor, though.

Ms. Sara Casselman: It could be, but I would say that's not up there in the top factors. A lot of it has to do with whether they feel they're going to be believed; whether or not they're living in fear of the person; whether or not they've had negative experiences with our criminal justice; whether or not they feel their families are going to support them; and whether or not they want all the information about their personal lives out there for the public knowledge.

I do think we have a number of amazing resources in our community that are connected with the courthouse. I co-chair the Sexual Assault Response Team of Waterloo Region, which is made up of 20 community partners. We sit together at the table and work on these issues. But I don't think the courthouse in any way really impacts whether survivors are coming forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sara Casselman, thank you very much for your information today, and thank you for all the work that you do in this committee—or rather in this community and this committee.

MS. DIANNE PILUK

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to now call on our next presenter, Dianne Piluk, to come forward. Good morning.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you'd like.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Thank you. I came prepared.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And you've got your tissues. Wow, you're all set. Dianne, you're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee. Then we will ask you some questions. Please start, for the record, by stating your name. Begin any time.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Good morning. My name is Dianne Piluk. Thank you for giving me this time to speak. I'm not a professional speaker; however I have something to say worth hearing. I'm a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, sexual assault. I was abused by a family member who was not from my father's side of the family.

When I initially reported the abuse I was a minor. I was blamed for what had happened to me. I received no treatment or compassion. I grew up thinking I was a bad kid. I felt like I was put on earth to be sexually abused. No one cared for me.

As I grew into adulthood, my issues surrounding the abuse were surfacing faster than I could stuff them back down. The first time I asked for help I was 18. I set up counseling. I was not allowed to choose the gender of the counselor. I was scared but knew I needed help. I ended

up with a male counselor here in Kitchener. He hit on me in our first session. He put his hands on me. That confirmed it for me: There was something terribly wrong with me. I was clearly doing something wrong. I was unhelpable and not worthy of help.

0840

Without proper help, I became a dependant in various ways on our social system. I was relentlessly bullied as a child. I had a baby at 18. I had a physically abusive relationship that I fled from. I stayed in a shelter for a short time. I collected social assistance. When I found work, it was minimum wage, and I lived in housing. I saw doctors repeatedly for depression, never quite getting the exact help I needed. Had I received help for sexual abuse, sexual assault when I disclosed, I would not have been the draw that I was on our social system.

After 12 years of suffering and stomping and shoving down my emotional pain over the abuse, I met a man worth having a relationship with. In this relationship, I felt safe and secure for the very first time in my life. Now in my thirties, I felt safe enough to test the waters and seek some kind of resolution: justice for that little girl in me.

I spoke to police. I gave a three-hour statement. I was treated and spoken to kindly and felt believed. I was really surprised to be believed. I was told that the accused would be charged with numerous offences. He was arrested and held in jail. Once in custody, he had a stroke.

Due to the effects of the stroke and the outright refusal to seek treatment, several competency hearings were held. Each hearing focused on the well-being of the accused; never was my well-being ever taken into consideration. The case abruptly ended when the accused was found mentally unfit to stand trial.

Seeking help and yet again not getting it sent me into a terrible depression. With all my emotions spewed out, I was a mess. I just didn't have the energy to stuff them down again.

During my court case, I was caring for two little ones and soon had a fourth. I never left my kids with a babysitter. I could not take a chance that they, too, would be hurt the way I was. I cared for them.

I spoke to a woman from Healthy Babies. I shared with her my lack of trust, and she suggested I connect with the Sexual Assault Support Centre, an organization that saved me, saved my life. It cared for me in a way I had never experienced. Even though I felt cared for, it took a long time for me to develop a deep enough trust to get me to where I am today. I was abused at preschool age until I was kicked out of the house as a teen when I reported the abuse and was not believed about the abuse.

The Sexual Assault Support Centre never put a time limit on my healing. I was encouraged to disclose as much or as little as I wanted. While helping me build my self-esteem and develop healthy boundaries, I was finally in control of myself, thus enabling me to finally accept care and help, and finally begin a healing journey.

Once my healing began, I felt enough strength in myself to finally tell my counsellor, family, doctor and husband that I in fact had been sexually abused, sexually

assaulted by two separate offenders. I had, in all my years, never once spoken of the first abuse, as I was so young and had believed I was to blame. With almost no one believing I was abused by one person, certainly no one would believe that it had happened by two people.

Again, I reported to police. I met with two SASC volunteers, where they were required to give their personal info to the police. The volunteers were there for support before and after my appointment. This time I felt much more scrutinized. I did not feel like I was believed. I felt the detective was new to this field and may have lacked experience. I was asked at the beginning of questioning to tell the truth. I internalized this as a feeling of not being believed and supported. While this was not the case, I definitely needed some compassion at that time.

So at this time I ask this group to say “penis.” That’s my thoughts exactly. If this room of people does not want to say “penis” for no reason, then why would I? Why would anyone? Of course, I was at the police station to tell the truth. After some time—months—several charges were laid against this man. It took a year for the case to get to trial, a year where I put my life on hold. I was always looking over my shoulder, as I had already experienced retaliation from my family before. I was extremely nervous, and required medication to reduce my anxiety.

When the trial date finally arrived, the trial was switched, without my input, from a trial to a pretrial. This triggered an anxiety uproar for me. I was not in control. I had no input. While in court, the judge decided to break for lunch. The defence lawyer asked the judge if he could ask me just one question, and she agreed. The lawyer yelled at me—ah, yes, one of his many tactics to shake me of my truth. The judge found enough evidence to proceed with a trial, yet another year of my life being put on hold.

For four days following the pretrial, my house, where my kids live, was under surveillance. I tried to ignore the odd movements of the person inside the car. When my kids expressed their discomfort, I called the police. Coincidentally, the car recklessly drove off, blowing the stop sign on my street, once police had been dispatched.

I continued to fear for my life, and feared retaliation from my family. Because of the surveillance and the defence lawyer yelling at me, I asked Victim/Witness about getting a lawyer. I was told that even if I could afford a lawyer, the lawyer could not interfere. They could do nothing for me.

Again, I felt out of control. I did not want to be on the stand and yelled at again. It was abuse, and it re-victimized me all over again. I was so upset over the abusive manner in which I was treated in our archaic court system—notice how I didn’t call it a justice system. I was so upset, I wanted to back out.

I researched what would happen if I did not show up to court, and quickly realized I was not actually a person in the archaic eyes of the court; I was just a witness. If I as a witness do not show up for court, I could be charged with contempt of court. The person—me, the victim in

this violent sex crime—was actually taken or removed from the crime, removed from the process. I was again not real, not a person. I didn’t count.

I expressed my concerns by contacting the Ombudsman from the Ontario government and my counsellor. My counsellor’s response was assuring me she would be present in the courtroom. At the urging of the Ombudsman and my counsellor, I spoke with both Victim/Witness and the crown. That meeting did not go well. To my surprise, I was told that if my counsellor showed up to court, she would be asked to leave. The reason given was perception: How can this be good for me? My husband could not be in court at all times as he cared for our kids, so I could focus on what I had to do. I was left with literally no one on my side. I would have to attend court alone—alone while the accused was surrounded by a dozen of our family members staring at me, glancing, whispering, snickering and, yes, even threatening me in the courtroom.

To make matters worse, the defence lawyer was very well-versed in intimidating witnesses/victims: throwing his weight back in his chair, making crashing noises, sucking his teeth, sighing loudly, clearing his throat, clicking his pen, shaking his papers. When I complained, one court-associated person described him as “animated.” As described by me: a bully.

I managed, through resourcefulness, to get supports in place. I was surprised at how quick my testimony was, compared to pretrial. On the day of the verdict, I was optimistic. When the judge presented his findings, he said he found me to be truthful. The judge acquitted the person who sexually assaulted me on all charges. I was in a daze, in complete shock. The judge believed me, but acquitted this monster of all charges. It made no sense.

In my daze, I looked around the room to see a different staff member of the Sexual Assault Support Centre tear up. For the first time, I felt worthy of compassion, worthy of mourning what had happened to me and mourning all that I lost and continue to lose—that yet again, I would not receive justice. I felt like I was and had been fighting a losing battle, that things would always be as they had been.

0850

What does one do with all their pain? I’m going to take this terrible, awful pain, and I’m going to talk about it until I’m heard. I want to make sure I do everything I can to make it easier for the next person who reports sexual violence. I want to make sure this person is responded to appropriately.

I must stress that the current court system, which I call archaic, is deeply flawed for victims of sexual violence. My first example is—and we hear it all the time—when we hear of sexual violence against women, we hear, “Let the courts decide.” It in fact means the accused is innocent until proven guilty and the victim is lying until proven truthful—he was innocent, and I was lying. “The accused is innocent until proven guilty” means the victim is lying until proven truthful.

Then what happened? What failed in my case? The judge found me to be truthful. Why was the accused not

found guilty? Both cannot be truthful in this accusation. I accused him of sexually assaulting me, and the judge found me to be truthful, and yet he shall never be held responsible for what he did to me. Only I am left to deal with what he has done to me—only me. I'm responsible.

Our court system is not designed to deal with truth. Our courts are clearly not concerned with truth; otherwise, defence lawyers would not be allowed to coach the accused. You don't need coaching if you tell the truth. The accused was clearly coached, repeating the same canned answers. Truth and justice are not concerns of the court.

Women don't come forward with their abuse experience because my experience is the norm. If the protection of a lawyer for all victims of sexual violence is in place, then in court I would not have been yelled at. Intimidation antics would have been halted. My support would not have been removed from court. This case would have focused on me and what I experienced. If I had a lawyer, my house would not have been under surveillance. The defence could focus on the case and not my sexual history and the victim compensation board—which I have not applied for.

In closing arguments, the crown called me a pensive, combative witness. I was offended by this description. This is the crown, supposed to be on my side. I was so offended that I felt the need to look up these words, to make sure I understood what he meant. What I saw in my head when I was called pensive and combative was a sad yet angry Tinker Bell punching people. While the crown claimed this name was not designed to hurt me, it did. I feel the need to say I did not punch anyone during this case. I wonder if a man would have been called combative for standing up for himself.

Because the defence lawyer focused so much of his thoughts on how my only reason for coming to court would be for my own financial gain, I must tell you what I lost. I lost everything that I should have been, could have been, would have been. I must tell you that I lost my entire childhood, my innocence, my right to be safe, to feel happy and loved, to have a life as a teen, young adult and adult free from the effects of sexual abuse and sexual assault. Each time I had court, my husband missed time from work. We are still, to this day, trying to catch up for the loss of pay.

No victim of sexual violence should ever have to absorb any costs to attend court. Lawyers should be provided for the protection of all victims of sexual abuse and sexual assault at no cost to them.

I needed to remain a person during trial. Sexual history is still being brought up in court, even though this is not allowed. This must be stopped.

The crown is too concerned with doing all things proper, allowing abusive questioning to continue. Defence is not at all concerned and will do what they feel they can get away with.

There is no balance in court. A limit on supporters for the accused in court needs to be put in place. Supporters who partake in staring, noises and threats should be removed and not allowed back into the courtroom. Court

needs to stop allowing antics. I deserved to testify in a safe place.

Police need to question victims less like an interrogation. Professionals, like judges, police, doctors, court staff and politicians, need to seek more education on the effects of trauma. Education shows a willingness to learn for change, not bias.

The persons who abused me didn't limit how many times they abused me. After care should not be limited in these cases. Specific counselling should be accessible and free of charge. How can counselling sessions be limited when the side effects of sexual assault are this large? Depression, anxiety, panic, shyness, social isolation, stomach issues, sexual dysfunction, agoraphobia, cutting, drinking, drugging, emotional eating, bingeing, purging, starving, inactivity, unexplained full-body pain, relationship issues, poor sleep, insomnia, confusion, dissociation, poor boundaries, poor self-esteem, low education, low earnings—these are just some of the side effects.

Lastly, there is a case recently before the courts in Ontario, actually rather close to home, where a worker was physically assaulted on the job by a non-worker. Co-workers attended court with clothing identifying themselves as a co-worker, as they were sending a message to the judge. No one was warned about perception. These supporters—and there were many—were not removed from the court. I suggest to you that sexual assault victims and domestic violence victims are being discriminated against by our courts. Thank you very much for your time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Piluk, thank you very much for sharing your experiences with us. I want you to know that this committee is listening to you.

Committee members, in the interest of hearing Dianne's full story, we've gone a little over time. We have three minutes remaining. Perhaps some very brief comments, if not questions, starting with MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you for coming.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Thank you for having me.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I applaud you for your courage. We all do. I'm sorry you didn't feel believed. I'm sorry you didn't feel helped, and we're here to try and fix that.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Me too.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I know, and thank you for that. Everyone here thanks you.

Can you, in addition to what you already said which has been so helpful, add anything else to what would have made your obviously very difficult and traumatic experience easier for you?

Ms. Dianne Piluk: It would have been a lot easier for me had all the grown-ups, when I reported the abuse, been held accountable for not getting me help. There were more than 20 adults who knew what had happened. I continued to tell relatives, family members, friends of family, my friends' parents. I think that grown-ups need to be accountable for what they hear. If you've heard someone is affected by abuse, you have to remove your-

self from it and how it will affect you, and you need to report it and be held responsible if you don't.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to thank you for your bravery in coming here this morning. These are the stories we want to hear because we do have to fix the system.

You were eventually helped by the local sexual assault centre?

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Yes, Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Who spoke before.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: So I thank them for listening to you and for helping you.

When you went through the judicial system, and I don't know how long ago that was, were they able to make the report that you were not treated fairly? Did someone report to the hierarchy of the justice system that you were not treated fairly?

Ms. Dianne Piluk: The court case that I just attended ended in October. Are you asking specifically about my support being removed from court?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: I've not dealt with that yet. I'm not letting it go, even though it was months ago. I'm gaining strength. It was just a few months ago for me. It needs to be dealt with, though. It's extremely important that this doesn't happen to someone else who isn't strong enough to get a second support in.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Dianne. Today you said, "I'm going to talk about all this awful pain until I'm heard," so I want to let you know that you were heard, I'm sure, by everyone, including the audience.

I just want to leave you with one message. The most powerful thing for us, I think, is listening to your experience through the court system. You said that for you the court system was not a justice system. I just want to let you know that, going forward, we're going to try to address that. Thank you very much for your courage today.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Dianne, thanks again for coming and sharing your experiences with this committee. We invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

MR. JUDAH OUDSHOORN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter, Judah Oudshoorn, to come forward. Good morning, Judah.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you like.

You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee and then we're going to ask you some questions. Start by stating your name and any titles you want to give us, and begin anytime.

0900

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Good morning. My name is Judah Oudshoorn. Honourable Chair Daiene Vernile and honourable committee members, thank you for the opportunity to present to you this morning. It's actually especially an honour to speak after Sara and Dianne, two people I have a tremendous amount of respect for and who give me a lot of hope that meaningful change is possible.

Although my expertise on the topic of sexual violence has a professional foundation—I am a professor in community and criminal justice; I've worked for many years with survivors of sexual abuse, both male and female; I've worked with people who have offended sexually; I've worked as a restorative justice mediator, facilitating dialogue between victims and offenders in cases of sexual abuse—today I represent myself. I identify as male; you will see why that's important a little later on. I also identify as someone who grew up in family violence, a victim of child abuse. Today, I also speak as a volunteer with the Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program of the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region.

I have three recommendations to make to you today. I'll list them now and then go into further detail on each one.

My first recommendation is that the Ontario government should acknowledge that sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence; that the problem, the root cause, is largely male violence.

My second recommendation is that the Ontario government should focus efforts on prevention by engaging men and boys in ending sexual violence.

My third recommendation is that the Ontario government should provide new sustainable funding to local sexual assault support centres to do the work of prevention, of engaging men and boys.

I know your mandate goes beyond prevention. Indeed, we do need to improve our responses in the aftermath of sexual violence, as we've just heard from Dianne. We need better funding supports for survivors and we need to make our legal system less an instrument of harm and more one of justice and healing.

We know that one in three women and one in six men will experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetime. At some point, we have to go downstream and do more work to stop sexual violence from happening in the first place. Prevention, for me, is a hopeful topic. We know the scope of the problem: It's an epidemic. We know the primary source of sexual violence: It's mostly men.

We have some evidence-based ways to fix it. We know that if we engage men and boys, we can change the culture that promotes unhealthy, violent versions of masculinity. Prevention is a hopeful topic, but I've often thought that there's no political will to actually take

meaningful steps to prevent sexual violence. We live in an age where the politics of fear reign. We are led to believe that we can incarcerate our way out of crime; that we can punish our way to safer communities. We can't.

A tough-on-crime approach is wrong-headed, but I've also been wrong-headed. I've made a gross assumption that political leaders don't care about prevention, yet you, this committee, are here today as leaders in our province with a mandate to consider the prevention of sexual violence. Together, let's get tough on root causes. In the Waterloo region, we call this "getting smart on crime."

Recommendation number 1: The Ontario government should acknowledge that sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence; that the problem, the root cause, is largely male violence. The primary root cause of sexual violence and harassment is men, male perpetrators. The primary reason for this is rape culture: boys and men being raised with permission to act out their sexuality in violent ways. We know that sexual violence affects all genders; however, we also know that women are more likely than men to be survivors of sexual violence.

Statistics at universities and colleges are troubling. Approximately one in four women will experience completed or attempted rape over the course of a college career—sexual and ethnic minorities even more so than white, heterosexual women. As many as 13% of women attending college are victimized by stalking. The Change Project, an initiative between the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region and Wilfrid Laurier University, released a report earlier this year indicating that approximately 40% of students surveyed, which was over 500, had experienced some form of sexual violence—gendered violence—during their tenure as students.

Although all genders are victims of sexual violence, when it comes to perpetrators, the statistics are skewed in the direction of men. Men are hurting women, transgender people, children and other men at epidemic rates. Statistics about male violence at universities and colleges are also troubling. Multiple studies across multiple decades have consistently found that 35% to 50% of college men indicate they would likely perpetrate rape if they knew they would not get caught. In fact, a nationally representative sample of college men in the United States found that 25% of college men had sexually assaulted someone since the age of 14. This estimate has been remarkably consistent over time, starting with studies in the late 1980s.

A recent 2014 study found that approximately 10% to 15% of male college students report that they have perpetrated sexual assault in the last year.

The problem is not isolated to college settings. Similar rates exist in community samples: 83% of violence committed against women in Canada is perpetrated by men. Female rape victims report 98% of perpetrators as male. Female stalking victims report 80% of perpetrators as male. Male rape victims report predominantly male perpetrators. I think you get the point.

If all the world is a stage, as Shakespeare famously scripted, masculinity is being performed as violent. Even

though, in the words of Shakespeare, a man plays many parts, all appearances indicate that there's a dominant script that many men are following. The masculine script is strongly linked to sexual violence. When one considers male attitudes about sex, sex is too often blurred with violence. It is about taking without consent. It is harmful.

Researchers have examined the ways that college men often talk about sex. The metaphors used are about power and control, not consent and healthy relationships. Sex is described by men as a game, a hunt, a conquest, a war and a triumph. Women are described as possessions and objects in the service of men.

I want to make a bold statement to you: It is time to acknowledge that the primary risk factor for perpetrating sexual violence is being male, being a boy or man raised in a culture of rape. But my message is not anti-man. I identify as a man, after all. My message is simply honest. My message is not that men are bad; it's that we as men have work to do. We have a responsibility to stand up and speak out about male violence. Anti-violence educator Jackson Katz says it like this: "We're not guilty because we're men. We're responsible—because we're men—either for speaking out or for not speaking out about other men's violence."

My message is not that boys and men can't be victims of sexual violence—they are—nor that women can't be perpetrators—they too are, although not nearly as often. My message is that we need a gendered analysis. Don't allow cries of "Not all men are violent" or "What about male victims?" to distract you from getting smart about the root cause, which is male violence.

My message is also not about individual problem men. Our society as a whole supports male violence. We live in a rape culture. Rape culture means (1) that male violence is widespread; and (2) that male violence is normalized, as if acting violently is what it truly means to be a man, as if it is normal for sex and violence to be blended together.

I've asked hundreds of men what they think society expects them to be as men. The most common words that I hear are "tough," "powerful," "in control," "wealthy," "muscular," "aggressive," and then I also ask them, "What are you not supposed to be as a man?" and I hear "a woman," "a girl" or "gay." We have a lot of work to do with men.

The third element of rape culture means that victims are blamed and doubted when they report. We hear questions like "What was she wearing?" or "She had sex with him before, didn't she?" or "She shouldn't have been out alone." There are all sorts of ways rape culture blames people who are victimized, placing emphasis on what she must have done wrong, as if people bring on sexual violence to themselves.

All of these are elements of rape culture. Rape culture gives permission for men to use violence and to blame their victims for it when they do.

Some might argue that highlighting the issue of violence in gender terms limits the discussion, pitting men against women and women against men.

0910

My aim here is not to create a divide between genders, between women and men. Ultimately, people are people, however they identify. My hope would be that someday we can just talk about the issue or the problem, which is violence, and focus less on the gender component, but we aren't there yet. Talking about violence as a gendered phenomenon is one step towards ending it.

Again, the Ontario government should acknowledge that sexual violence is a form of gendered violence. The question then becomes, how do we get there? How do we work to get at this root cause?

My second recommendation is that the Ontario government should focus efforts on prevention by engaging men and boys in ending sexual violence.

There are some exemplary evidence-based programs that engage boys and men in ending sexual violence. One of these that you've heard a little bit about today already is the Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program of the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region, of which I've been a volunteer since 2008. The Male Allies program, or MAASV for short, is a public education program. It provides training for men around issues of sexual violence, concepts of masculinity, how to respond to disclosure of sexual violence, and how men can be active in ending violence against women, including exploring these subjects with young men.

Once men receive this training, they are equipped to go into the community as volunteers to educate and actively work with men and boys in their personal lives to end sexual violence and help young males learn, grow, and develop positive relationships and a good self-image.

The Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program is about:

- men and boys actively working to end sexual violence;
- men and boys learning and growing in their knowledge of healthy relationships and healthy masculinity;
- men as role models offering the counter story to the dominant story of hyper-masculinity and toughness;
- men providing opportunities for young males to engage in activities and discussions that develop a positive self-image and healthy relationships;
- men and boys spreading the violence prevention message in their families, workplaces, peer groups and communities; and
- a network of males providing ongoing support and opportunities for learning.

The motto of the Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program is "Stand up. Speak out." I've come to believe that, as men, we do need to stand up and speak out. I figure that as men, when it comes to sexual violence, we're either violent, we're silent or we're meaningfully engaged.

Speaking of meaningfully engaged, the program director of the MASSV program, Stephen Soucie, has delivered over 250 workshops to 4,000 people in the region of Waterloo in the past few years, most of those young men and boys.

Finally, my third recommendation: The Ontario government should provide new, sustainable funding to local sexual assault support centres to do the work of prevention and engaging men and boys. I would like to see male-allies programs exist right across this province. I'd like every young boy, during his formative years, to have an opportunity to be engaged in discussions about healthy masculinity, about consent, about healthy sexuality and about ending violence.

It's important that this funding be new funding. I don't want money to be taken from support services for survivors, which are already underfunded.

It's important that this funding be sustainable.

It's important that male-allies programs be either embedded in or accountable to sexual assault support centres. These organizations have been at the front lines of ending sexual violence for decades. They know the issues. Their gendered analysis is necessary. Their experience is necessary. Their finger is on the pulse of the needs of local communities. Their leadership is necessary.

We are at a crucial point in Ontario's history where we have the opportunity to stem the epidemic of sexual violence that exists in our communities. Prevention is our smartest choice. We know that engaging men, educating them and involving them works. Let's work towards encouraging a kinder, gentler version of masculinity from our boys and men. Please support this type of prevention effort. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, Mr. Oudshoorn. Our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for being here today. Thank you for being part of the male-allies program in your community, and thanks again to the local Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region for being a pioneer probably in a program like this.

We have a short time so I can't ask a lot of questions, but when you mentioned about the number of seminars that have gone on, how did that get initiated? Did that man go into the community? Did the community come to him? Is there a model there that you could expand on just a little bit of how you did the outreach to men?

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Sure. That's a good question, and it's a little bit of both. Initially how it started was, there was training that was offered for men like myself to come and be trained. Then we started to advertise to the community that we could go out and speak to community groups.

Lately, Stephen Soucie has been doing a lot of work in schools and doing multiple sessions. One of the things that we've learned is that the evidence tells us that you can't just go in once and have a one-off conversation about this topic. He's going in and doing boys' groups with grade 7s and grade 8s and talking about masculinity, healthy relationships, consent and all those sorts of things. So it's a bit of both: The communities come to us, and we've outreached a little bit as well.

Ms. Laurie Scott: So your school board was no problem—going into your school board?

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: It's been fine going into the schools, yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Excellent.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: I don't know if they went through the school board or through individual schools.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus: MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Judah, for today. Thanks for saying you can't punish our way to safer communities. I completely agree with you.

But around the male allies—and this sort of builds on Laurie's question. We have to go where the kids are, really. You've asked for specific new funding for new programming around male allies. Can you just draw a picture for us of what that would look like? Hopefully, though, it would have an educational component to it.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Absolutely. I think one of our most important places to be is in the school. However, the evidence demonstrates to us that oftentimes, it works better and it's more sustainable if it's a community group going into the school and doing this. So I would imagine, again, something similar to what we're doing in this region, where you fund an organization like a sexual assault support centre to have a staff person who can train volunteers who can go into schools and can engage with young men and boys. It's also important that young boys have young men that they can look up to and listen to, and be trained by men.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much. I have to say, I don't know if you've given us your presentation, but I'm sure that we as committee members would love to have a copy of your presentation.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Sure.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: It's very, very to the point, today, I think of what we're looking for in terms of recommendations.

As you know, we're moving forward with a new sexual education curriculum, and I just wanted to have your input as to what you're saying in terms of prevention. When we talk about our sexual education curriculum, we talk about consent and making sure that we're addressing maybe not exactly the concern that you're raising—but how can we tie both of them together?

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: It's a hugely important question, and I think Sara highlighted this in her presentation, that it has to be multi-pronged. I've talked about one sliver that we need to address, right? The other part for me that is very important in the new sex education curriculum that's coming out is they start talking about consent in grade 2. I have a daughter who's in grade 2, and I'd be very pleased for her to be having conversations around consent. I think all of that fits together. We have to come into 2015 and have conversations about healthy sexuality at all layers and all levels, so having a quality, evidence-based sex education program is a very important part of that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for coming and speaking to our committee today.

As MPP Lalonde mentioned, we would like to get a copy, either a hard copy—or email your notes to our Clerk's office.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: I can do that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I invite you now to join our audience if you wish to.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter, from the Ontario Federation of Labour, Nancy Hutchison, to come forward.

Please have a seat; make yourself comfortable. You will have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Will I have a couple minutes' warning?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Absolutely. I will give you a one-minute warning, how's that?

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: That would be wonderful, thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So Nancy, begin any time.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you very much. My name, as you mentioned, is Nancy Hutchison, and I'm the secretary-treasurer of the Ontario Federation of Labour. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to all of you today about this very, very important subject.

The Ontario Federation of Labour is the central labour body for Ontario. We're the largest provincial labour body, the umbrella group of many of the affiliates in this province, by way of introduction. We are sisters and brothers in solidarity who always pursue social, economic and political justice, the goals on which the labour movement was founded.

We applaud the government's commitment to end sexual violence and harassment, and welcome the opportunity to comment on the Ontario government's plan. I'd like to stress today that the Ontario Federation of Labour's directors brought together members of our women's committee, our health and safety committee and our workers' compensation committee to consider the workplace component of this plan. We put our heads together and found where there were shortfalls and perhaps failures in legislation that could help with prevention, and we're going to speak to that.

0920

I would also like to say on a personal note, as a woman who worked in the mining industry for 18 years as a young woman, beginning in 1977, I could write a pretty sad book about some of the sexual harassment, abuse and actual very dangerous situations that had me fearing numerous times in the mines during the early years of my career. I'd like to just point out that I speak from experience on a lot of this.

The elimination of workplace violence and harassment will be an incredible, massive undertaking, as you know. There are many significant and unique problems facing our society, from murdered and missing indigenous

women and girls to the lack of supports and access to psychological professions for all people, even as close as northern Ontario, where, when you're dealing with harassment and violence and you need professional help, it isn't there for many of our members of society, especially in northern Ontario.

More resources for women's shelters and transition homes are needed, but let me be clear that the answer to the problem of sexual violence and harassment isn't to build more shelters and homes; it's actually to address the issue of prevention and to take the problem head-on for real solutions.

Aboriginal women and women of colour face double abuse from both racial and sexual harassment. These women, along with immigrant or disabled women, also suffer additional stresses from isolation, poverty and difficulties in communication. Language, religion, sexuality and traditional dress can also be factors in why certain people may be targeted for harassment. LGBTQ communities—gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer communities—face discrimination, harassment and threats of violence in the community and where they work.

Tackling bullying in schools is also an important initiative. Making an impact on the mindset of our next generation is key to having an impact and driving the shift in our society. According to research, we've seen that 55% of young men who were bullies in high school went on to have criminal records by the time they were 24 years old. We provide the abstract of the research in our appendix to the brief. The committee will know that we've just handed out a copy of our brief, which goes into a lot more detail on what I'm speaking about.

Workplace bullying and harassment is an incredible part of all of this. While the issues that the government is laying out in their plan are all important, there are others that may be in a better position to discuss those in detail. We intend to focus our energies on the role of the workplace with this action plan and the fact that all employees are entitled to a safe and healthy workplace, free from sexual violence and harassment. When the government says, "It's never okay," we couldn't agree more. Part of the action plan is to make the Occupational Health and Safety Act—a place where workers can be free of sexual harassment and violence, and we have some ideas regarding the changes to legislation and recommendations that could be made.

According to information provided by the Canada Safety Council, 72% of workplace bullies are people in a position of authority: bosses, supervisors. The victims tend to be the ones who lose their jobs, with 64% of workers quitting or being terminated. Another 13% are being transferred out of the job, and only 23% of cases are punished by the employer when the bully is a person in authority in a company. I think we saw a case at the CBC quite recently where there was zero tolerance once it was public and addressed, and we hope that that would be the norm throughout all companies, but sadly, it isn't until it becomes in the public eye.

We need additions to the duties of employers and supervisors under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to make it illegal for them to engage in sexual harassment or violence in the workplace. Our proposed language is provided in the appendix of our brief. We've actually written and drafted some legislation recommendations for you to consider.

Employers should have a clear duty to take steps to prevent harassment in the workplace. Two recent decisions at the Ontario Labour Relations Board which dealt with reprisals due to harassment complaints covered this point: "In the case of an employee who complains that he has been harassed, there is no provision in the" act currently, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, "that says an employer has an obligation to keep the workplace" free of harassment. It's actually stunning to think that in this day and age, in 2015, there's no provision that says they must keep it free from harassment. "The only obligation ... in the act is that an employer have a policy" and a program with dealing with these.

We've seen inspectors going into workplaces with horrific situations that they are meant to deal with, and they have to ask the employer, "Do you have a policy?" "Yes." "Do you have a program?" "Yes." It could be written on a napkin or on a scrap piece of paper posted somewhere on a bulletin board, and they comply with the act. That is not enough, and I think that's very clear with workers and especially with union reps.

We have proposed that the language not be limited to workers but include other persons in the workplace. We're thinking about situations where workers of other employers enter a workplace. We're seeing that a lot with service sectors and even, for example, office towers, where you have cleaning staff, and there are still people working in the building after hours. We've heard of situations where workers working for another employer have been victims of sexual violence and harassment. So we think the act should be expanded to deal with workers in a workplace and other people entering a workplace.

An employer can have the best harassment policy and procedure, but if it's the CEO of the organization that's the bully, the policy and procedure would mean little or nothing to the worker being bullied, because the worker would have to follow the complaint investigation, and it would be that CEO with the final say on what the repercussions would be. Usually those victims, as I said earlier, just slide away, being terminated in most cases.

Bad behaviour by employers and owners of companies is an issue we hear about all too often. One recent case by the OLRB dealt with the owner of a company who had humiliated and then fired a worker, and the OLRB found in their ruling that throughout the dismissal procedure, the process, the employer "acted in a manner that was unfair and in bad faith, being both untruthful, misleading and unduly insensitive."

We've referenced the cases in our brief, so you can go back and look at the entire cases.

There was another case represented by the Toronto legal clinic, which deals exclusively with workers who

do not have the benefit of union representation. There are many more examples of these legal clinics or the Office of the Worker Adviser that represent non-union workers. You can imagine, if unionized workplaces have these issues, what is happening out there with the unorganized workers without a union.

This particular case with the Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic dealt with a woman who was cutting hair, so independent, working in a small shop and sexually harassed and abused very often.

Section 57 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act must be amended also to include cease-and-desist orders that may be effective for abusive managers or supervisors who remain in the workplace. For example, the inspector then could write an order for an employer to cease and desist their action.

There's the question of what to do about predators that go from workplace to workplace, starting the cycle of abuse and leading a trail of broken and psychologically damaged people behind them. We hear that often, where companies will just shift the problem to a different location in their chain. I hate to think of—being of a Catholic upbringing myself, I can't help but think of the Catholic Church and the example of priests that were abusing young people, and they just, in their unwisdom, moved them from parish to parish instead of dealing with the problem. That's what we're often seeing in workplaces today.

Harassment and abuse often create a poisonous work environment for all workers who witness the action. There's a cone of silence that happens, and we can see when workers are made examples of.

0930

Defining sexual harassment and violence: The definition under the Occupational Health and Safety Act for workplace violence is restrictive and is limited to acts which cause or could cause physical harm—only physical harm. So where's the issue of psychological? Incidents of sexual abuse in the workplace should become part of the mandatory reporting requirement under section 52—mandatory. Under section 52 there are some things that the employer must report to the ministry; sexual violence and harassment is not one of them. We're saying that it should be reported to the Ministry of Labour as a flag so that it would trigger a visit and an investigation.

One example provided to us at our meeting was the inconsistent use of the term “sexual abuse” that involves long-term-care facilities. The employer in this case posted a notice for employees notifying them that sexual touching by a resident against another resident is considered sexual abuse and to watch for it, but if the resident does the same act of touching upon the staff, it's not considered sexual abuse. Think of that if you're the staff member. We heard this example where residents were putting their hands up the shirts and the tops and the uniforms of the long-term-care workers, but that wasn't sexual abuse in the eyes of the employer, grabbing breasts with hands under the work shirts. That was just an unfortunate incident that you had to handle. So the em-

ployers must take action to protect their workers in all cases. We hear that very often in the health care profession.

We've been advised by one of our affiliates that they had a situation where a personal support worker suffered psychological trauma when the man she was providing support for grabbed her and performed a sexual act on her. She was not physically harmed. But the employer's only response was to tell her to wash her clothing.

Then there are the workers who face bad behaviour from the public: retail workers who get yelled at for store return policies, medical secretaries who are bullied because of long wait times and wait lines for doctors and lab tests, social workers who are threatened by clients or their families. What has really been getting into the media lately is the trend of men who feel that they can sexually harass female TV news reporters as a new sport. These men are invading the workspace of these reporters. Think: This is these women's workspace. This is their job. They are performing their job. Sexually harassing them is not funny. It is not a joke. Many of the perpetrators are not juveniles. That's what stunning. As a mother of two sons, it's stunning to see the age group of these grown men, some with good jobs and university educations. They behave badly in front of cameras. What are those stations and those employers doing to protect those employees when they go out into the field?

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Nancy, you have one minute remaining.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Oh, my goodness. Okay.

The issue of temporary foreign workers—and you can see that I'm reading quickly. It's all in the brief. However, huge flags go up for temporary foreign workers who are at the mercy of employers that bring them into the country, that have the workspace for them, that usually provide housing, and that threaten to take away their passports or send them back to the country they came from if there's any report of sexual abuse or harassment.

Domestic workers: I plead to you all to consider that domestic workers be included in legislation. Can you believe that today the Occupational Health and Safety Act excludes what they call “servants,” which are really domestic workers, from the act and the protection that that gives?

Working alone: We've provided some language, legislation changes, in the area of working alone. Women are most vulnerable. Young women are most vulnerable. Whether you're a Tim Hortons worker or a chambermaid in a hotel room or a gas station attendant, when you're working alone with money there are also situations where you could be vulnerable.

Codes of practice: I bring your attention to the Canadian Standards Association and I ask you to look that up, because it's very, very important, around the issue of a best practice that could be adopted.

MOL inspectors: I think it's very important to ensure that they have for the workplace training for themselves as OPSEU members, as workers, not only in the area of sexual harassment and abuse at the workplace—I can tell

you that I knew some mining inspectors up north and when Bill 168 came into place, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act, they gasped—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, Nancy.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Okay, and I'm gasping.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to go to some questions for you now.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you, Madam Chair, and there's also a lot more to cover.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're happy to have your submission and we will read it very thoroughly. Thank you.

Our first question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for being here today and for sharing this very comprehensive brief. I think that's going to be very helpful.

One of the first things you pointed out is the fact that currently the Occupational Health and Safety Act only requires employers to have a policy, and there is no kind of feedback or standard or anything about the components of the policy. I wondered if your brief includes some elements of what should be in effective policies within workplaces. Actually, would you even go further and say that there should be some kind of standard policy that would ensure some consistency across workplaces?

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you, Ms. Sattler. It's a very good question, and one we tackle often because we're often asked if there are a set of best practices or standards. We say the best policies, programs and procedures are developed when the joint health and safety committee are involved in that development at the workplace with employers. We didn't include a checklist per se, but I'd be happy to forward one on to your committee, to the Clerk, where we would consider best standards.

But I think that's very important to note, that the employers doing this alone—often there are a lot of components left out. When you involve the workers, it's much more helpful.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you very much, Nancy, for your presentation. I want to thank you for your advocacy. It's very important work. I can definitely see the passion, and it goes beyond benefiting your members but everybody that's in the workplace. Thank you very much.

You mentioned much about the inspection, the fine-tuning of terminologies in the act—sorry you had to cut your presentation short on temporary foreign workers. I want to give you this chance to say a bit more about how to train them, how to educate them on their rights, so they can stand up and maybe come forward. What can we do to encourage them to come forward and start protecting themselves?

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you very much, sir, for that question and for giving me a little more of an opportunity. One of the key components, I think, that is critical is that there be no reprisals against workers. Right

now in the Occupational Health and Safety Act there is section 50 in the act, which really is not enforced by the Ministry of Labour. This is a very serious component that must be looked at. The ministry has actually told us that they do not enforce section 50.

Then, there are the exclusions I just spoke about, whether it be farm work or domestic work or temporary foreign workers. These are the most vulnerable, precarious workers, and they are excluded. I also mentioned in the brief the issue of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, which has not been amended in many years and it excludes the compensation being given to workers who have suffered from sexual violence and harassment.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final comment for you is from our PC caucus, MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. I'll let you take two angles, whatever you want to answer. One is, I didn't know if you wanted to finish anything else off that you didn't get out. The second was, I actually had a forced labour issue in the Kawartha Lakes part of my riding, and that's under a human trafficking aspect. I didn't know if you know anything about that or if you just wanted to finish off—you don't have to know about that particular incident, but it is foreign workers and forced labour.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: No, I think that's a very, very good point. I should point out that I've been appointed to the round table, by the government, on sexual violence and harassment, and thank you. A lot of you know that. I'm going to be bringing the workplace perspective, which deals with—and sex trade workers; we're hearing from those workers at the table as well.

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The temporary foreign worker piece is very, very important, and I think that's a component of workers that we really haven't heard from. I do want to stress that many of those workers may or may not be covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, so WSIB, workers' compensation. I'm going to stress that again—and thank you for the opportunity—because right now, the act does not address that even if it was in the course of employment that there is a sexual harassment/violence situation that causes a worker to go off work under a doctor's care, they are not covered.

Now, the Ontario Nurses' Association has challenged that. There was a Canadian charter challenge and the nurses won, so I'm hoping that the WSIB and the government are looking at amending the compensation act, the WSIA, to make sure that this prohibitive—illegal, really—practice stops. If there is gradual onset of the effects of sexual violence and harassment, then it should be covered under the workers' compensation act.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: You see I'm rushing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and addressing this committee today. We invite you to join our audience now if you wish to.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Yes, I would like that.

CHILD WITNESS CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next witness this morning, with the Child Witness Centre, Laura Muirhead. Committee members, we're running a little bit behind. I encourage you, again, to ask very concise questions if you can. Thank you.

Good to see you, Laura. Please make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water if you'd like. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee—up to 15 minutes, if you require that. Then we will ask you some questions. So please start, for the record, by stating your name and your organization.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: My name is Laura Muirhead and I am the executive director of the Child Witness Centre. I want to thank you all for being here and for the very diligent work that you are doing on this very, very important subject.

At the Child Witness Centre, we support children, youth and their families who are victims or witnesses of crime through the criminal justice system in both Waterloo region and Guelph and Wellington county. We deal with kids and their families once charges are laid. We help them cope with their anxiety, fear and stress, minimizing the revictimization and potential traumatization through the court process. We help kids be heard, and they and their families tell us that with our support they feel enabled and empowered to tell their story.

Over the past two years, we've been working with our justice and mental health partners in Waterloo region to establish a child and youth advocacy centre, which I'm going to refer to often through this as a CYAC, because it's less of a mouthful.

I know that you've heard from Karyn Kennedy, some of you, who is the executive director at BOOST, about the child and youth advocacy centre, and last week the Ontario network presented as well. You will also be hearing later in the week from the Cornwall child advocacy centre. We each have a slightly different spin on it, but it's all about trying to bring awareness to the fact that kids who are sexually abused need support, and that if we can do that kind of work up front, it may help us in the long run with adults.

Child and youth advocacy centres are a best-practice model for investigating and supporting children and youth who have been victims or witnesses of sexual or physical abuse or maltreatment, and for supporting their families. So I want to thank you again for the opportunity to present to this committee, specifically regarding the support and prevention of sexual violence and harassment of children and about how we can improve the response to Ontarians under the age of 18 who have experienced sexual violence and harassment.

Our agency has been privileged to work with children and youth and their families involved in the justice system for over 30 years. We strongly believe that children and youth have very different needs and require different approaches than adults when they have been victimized and are involved in the criminal justice system.

Over the years, we've supported more than 6,000 children in Waterloo region. About 600 of them were in Guelph and Wellington county. Almost 100% of those kids were victims or witnesses of abuse and violence.

Our dream for our community, for our province, is that we all live in a community and a province where kids can be kids, can grow up safe and without the threat of abuse and violence. The first step, we believe, to realizing that dream is to establish a centre of excellence, a child and youth advocacy centre where investigations of child sexual and physical abuse are done by specialized professionals in a safe and child-friendly setting, and support is provided to help deal with the trauma of the abuse.

We've been working with our community partners to implement the CYAC over the past year and a half, and we hope to open in 2016. We know that this will exponentially improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the process but, more importantly, improve the experience for the child and youth in the family as well as all of the partners who participate in the process.

CYACs are a proven best-practice response to child abuse. They've been in the US for more than 25 years. There are more than 700 of them. Five years ago, our federal justice department said, "Yes, this is best practice. Yes, we can be better in Canada. Yes, we want to provide seed funding to get these kinds of groups going across the country."

Their focus is that child advocacy centres are a seamless, coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing the needs of child victims or children who have witnessed crime. CACs or CYACs minimize system-induced trauma by providing a child-friendly setting for child victims or witnesses and their families.

A CYAC is, first of all, a safe, confidential child- and youth-friendly place where investigations of suspected sexual and physical abuse and maltreatment will happen. With the support of an advocate, these kids and their families will be linked to support services at the time of investigation as they are needed. Those support services will be available to all kids regardless of whether charges are laid.

One of the big things that a CYAC does is that it puts the needs of the child first, because sometimes what may be best for the child may not necessarily be what's best for the mum or may not be what's best for the family in general. It's important for these young people to have a place where kids' voices are heard and where their needs are put first.

In 2013, we did a needs assessment and feasibility study funded by the federal government to look at establishing a CYAC in Waterloo region. A number of gaps were identified. Clearly the system was fragmented, and that's not because the partners that were involved in the system weren't all doing a good job. They were all doing a good job, but everybody works in their silos. They were the group that came together and said, "We can all do a better job."

It was also identified that child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, is greatly under-reported—that was the

feeling by the service providers—largely because people don't know how, and they're afraid of what might happen if they do say something.

There was a strong need to expand the current collaborations and protocols and develop a more coordinated kind of approach. Based on these findings, there was wholehearted support, and we had struck a very strong steering committee to develop a model for a child and youth advocacy centre in this region. That involved the Waterloo Regional Police, family and children's services, the crown attorney's office, the medical community and the counselling communities.

If I had video, I would show you a YouTube video that's about two minutes that would really capture the essence of what a child and youth advocacy centre can do. But instead, I'm going to ask you to turn to the next page. You'll see this hand-drawn diagram here in the package. This is an example of how things happen today. Hanna is age five. She tells her teacher that she's being hurt at home. The teacher takes her to the principal. They might see a school nurse. They might go to the hospital. They might see a social worker. Then they might go see the police. They might then go back to the hospital. They might see child protection, then they might see a crown attorney and then they might see a counsellor. All the while, this poor little girl, Hanna, is travelling to multiple places, talking to multiple people, and the next time she has to talk to somebody, they may be different people again.

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What a child and youth advocacy centre—if you turn to the next page—does is, when Hanna says something to her teacher, the next step will be, Hanna and her mom will come to the child and youth advocacy centre—so they'll come to one place. They'll get to talk to a nurse, they'll get to talk to a counsellor, they'll get to talk to the crown attorney, they'll get to talk to the police and family and children services, if required, and they will talk to an advocate as well who will help them navigate through the process. When they come back the next time, she will get to see those same people and she will work with those people all the way through the process.

What do you think the chances are that Hanna will come out of the process in a better way on the second sheet than she may have on the first sheet? The evidence suggests that very much it will help her and her family deal with the trauma that has been put upon them and give them a better chance of moving on.

I wanted to just talk about the five key elements that are considered best practices and that are part of our implementation—so it's co-locating a dedicated team of professionals with child-specific skills. That would be police officers who know and are trained on how to talk to kids, how to interview kids and how to ask kids questions so that kids know how to answer those questions. The police, family and children services, the advocate and the counsellors would all be working together as an interdisciplinary team all focused on meeting the needs of the child. Again, that kind of process and that kind of

structure allow the child the best opportunity to move forward.

Just to give you some numbers: In 2013, the police investigated 750 cases of child abuse; 300 of them were sexual abuse of children in our community and 450 were physical abuse. Typically, when a CYAC opens, they experience 20% to 30% growth on those numbers. So we anticipate, in a given year, having 900 to 1,000 investigations which could involve more than one child. That means almost three investigations every day of the year in this community alone. In addition, sexual assault is believed to be reported less than 10% of the time, and 60% of all victims of police-reported sexual assault are children under 18.

Waterloo Regional Police Service, in addition to the 750 investigations of child abuse that they did, also investigate, on average, 100 cases of historical child abuse. Those are people like us sitting around the table who are saying, "When I was a child, this happened to me," and those people are now coming forward and the police are involved in those investigations. Our hope is that with a child and youth advocacy centre, those people will be more comfortable coming forward when they're children and you don't have that long-term kind of impact.

The Badgley report suggested that one in three girls and one in six boys will experience an unwanted sexual act by the time they're 18. These numbers really scare me. When I extrapolate them into Waterloo region, that would suggest that 25,000 children would experience some sort of sexual assault by the time they're 18. Add to that physical abuse, which is the other part that we're focusing on at the child and youth advocacy centre, and then you extrapolate that across the province, it makes a really compelling case for why investing in child and youth advocacy centres as a best practice to supporting kids at this point is a good thing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Laura, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Okay. In your package, there's some information about long-term implications through the Public Health Agency of Canada.

I guess I'd like to talk about—it was already mentioned by the person who spoke before me—the sexual harassment of female broadcasters. The firing of that perpetrator, I think sends a really clear message regarding tolerance and a shift in the social norms. As you're talking about shifting social norms with women and violence, there needs to be a huge shift in terms of what's acceptable with children, and shining a light on the issue of child abuse in a community allows you to be able to do that.

Children are 20% of our population but 100% of our future, and we feel strongly that the province needs to send a clear message that sexual abuse of children is not okay either and strengthen your response by supporting the implementation of child and youth advocacy centres.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for your presentation this morning. Our first question for you is from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Laura, for coming today. It's an incredible centre. I think all of us in Waterloo region have had a tour of it.

When it comes to children, what are the outcomes after they have gone through this centre compared to what they would face—in your diagrams, page 1 and page 2? Do you have statistics regarding that? They're fairly compelling.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: One of the things that they talk about in terms of outcomes is that it's more efficient. Cost savings-wise, long-term in terms of health costs, it's a really difficult thing to measure. Actually, the federal government is grappling with that. How do you know what it would have cost you? What I can tell you is that a lot of the feedback is that the kids and their families feel better about the process. If they came across somebody else who had experienced similar abuse, they would be more likely to say, "You should tell someone," as opposed to today, they may have a bad experience going to the police, and they would be less likely to encourage anybody else to come forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks, Laura. We had a real pleasure speaking to you at the local office, but more importantly, my colleague Catherine and I travelled to Toronto and toured the Boost set-up in Toronto. It's clearly amazing.

So tell me: What do we need, provincially, in terms of resources to make this happen locally?

Ms. Laura Muirhead: We need funding—is that what you mean?

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, absolutely.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: We need infrastructure kind of funding to support the running of the office, and we need funding to support the advocate program.

Mr. Michael Harris: I know the federal government has put money aside; that's just a bit of a start. But provincially, Toronto has funding given to them by the province. I'm not sure if you can speak to how much, and then, roughly, how much you would need here in the region.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: The province gave money to Boost, and there's some confusion as to whether it was specifically earmarked for the child and youth advocacy centre or not. We would be looking for probably a couple hundred thousand dollars a year sustainable.

That's the single biggest question we get from the community as we're about to launch this: What's your sustainability plan? We're hoping, both locally as well as from the network perspective, to have this movement across the province and to get that kind of infrastructure sustainable funding.

Mr. Michael Harris: And you submitted that request—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks very much, Laura. Just to build on what Michael mentioned, that tour of Boost was

really amazing, because it's co-location. It is a very streamlined way of developing resources and funding resources. But you have to fund collaboration; it just doesn't happen by itself. Can you just build on sort of the vision for Waterloo region and why it really should be a provincial model?

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Just back on the funding, all of the partners are bringing their own funding to the table in order to fund part of it. The incremental funding would be to support the gap right now, which would be for the advocate kind of role, which is the navigator in the child and youth advocacy centre. I don't think I'm answering your question, though, Catherine. Why should this be a provincial model?

Ms. Catherine Fife: That's right.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Because of the outcomes that we need to have—that we owe the kids in this province—and to not set one community up on a better way than another community. I would say it's about equality and accessibility. I think every child in this province deserves that and should have the right to receive service like that when they've been a victim.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Laura Muirhead, thank you very much for coming and informing this committee of the important work that you're doing. I want to personally thank you for the time that you spent with me giving me a tour of your facility; it was very informative. Say hi to your daughter, too. Thank you.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Will do.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE OF BRANT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our next witness to come forward from the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant and Taylor the Turtle. Please come forward. Have a seat; make yourself comfortable. You're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Begin by stating your name and the name of your organization.

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Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Okay. My name is Carrie Sinkowski, and I am the manager of Taylor the Turtle at the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant. Thank you for allowing me to come here today and share my turtle. I'm not going to make you guys sit through a lesson or anything like that.

Interjection.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Well, it would actually be kind of interesting.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Can you show us the turtle? Show us the turtle.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: This is Taylor. We created Taylor in 2009. My dad and my sister actually are the ones who designed it for us. We had no funds. What we were seeing was an increased need in the community for children's programming regarding sexual abuse prevention work.

The programs that were available we were finding were not reflective of or responsive to the needs that we

were identifying. What was available were Good Touch Bad Touch programs, which have their own merit but are narrow in scope. They focus too much on the positive and scary scenarios. The other programs that were available were the Stranger Danger programs; within our client population at the sexual assault centre, we have very few people for whom that was their experience.

We did some research and we found that increasing children's resilience, building their self-confidence, building their body awareness were better protective factors, because unfortunately there's no 100% way to protect a child from sexual abuse. What we need to focus on is decreasing the incidence of sexual abuse and increasing the likelihood that a child will share that experience with someone if it has happened to them.

With our program, we operated with no funding for a couple of years within my community education program. I've been with the centre since 2002 as the community educator and community developer. In 2009 was when my sister and my dad did some pro bono work for us and then in 2010 was when I secured a Trillium grant for the capital and operational costs.

We created facilitator kits because the idea was to outsource the delivery of sexual abuse prevention to the community to increase the community's capacity—so not about increasing our statistics or our capacity to sexual abuse prevention work; this was about something more. This was about engaging the community on issues of sexual violence. Right from the beginning, we tried to make it a community collaboration. Our original partners were the Brantford police; St. Leonard's Community Services; Woodview children's centre; Nova Vita women's services; Ganohkwasa, the shelter in Ohsweken; and victim services—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Carrie, I'm just going to give you some advice. I'm being told by the audio people that you're very close to the microphone and it's popping.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Is it popping? Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, so if you'd just lean back a little bit—there you go.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Is that good?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's good. Thank you.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: All right, perfect. So right from the beginning, we wanted the project to be as collaborative as possible—oh, and the Grand Erie District School Board was our final partner. Together, we created the curriculum. We came up with six lessons, which are on the handout that I provided all of you. Then, when we created the facilitator kits, what we did was we created lesson cards. On the front of each card is an image with the lesson title, and then on the back of the card are all the questions and prompts and activities to support that lesson.

We tried to make the program as broad as possible so that parents can do it with their children and so teachers can do it in their classrooms. We have therapists in town who use it in their individual counselling sessions. Chil-

dren's aid uses it within their parenting groups. Within my own program—I go to an after-school program once a month. So it's nice and broad. You can make it a 20-minute presentation, or there's a kindergarten teacher I know in town who does one lesson a month. They explore that lesson through their English class, through their health class. They use it in many disciplines within their classroom.

The methodology we use is things that build their self-expression. We do art, we do role-playing, we play games, we do collaborative games, we do storytelling and we also do the guided discussion. Today, actually, I go to my after-school program, and we're going to be doing our wrap-up for the year. This year, we went to the fire hall and the police station as part of the program to talk about their right to a safe community and who can be safe in the community. We explore different topics. The program now—for myself, I see between 5,000 and 10,000 kids a year. Brantford police and Brant OPP, it's their primary school program, so they are seeing thousands of children a year. And now the public school board in our riding is also using the program for all grade 1 teachers, because our program actually matches the health curriculum quite well, very nicely. We focus a lot on consent—that's age-appropriate, obviously—self-expression, about body awareness and the mind-body connection. We find that children who are more present in their body are more aware of what's happening and they are going to listen to those warning signals, and if they are self-confident, they're going to listen to warning signals—because we know that sexual abuse doesn't often start out with someone immediately touching your bathing suit parts, which is what all the other traditional programs focus on. We know that it starts out with—that there's a process of grooming, that it might be hair touching or shoulder rubbing. That's confusing, because it might feel uncomfortable, and our “uh-oh” feeling in our stomach might be telling us something is not okay, but it's not a bathing suit part that has been identified within the existing sexual abuse prevention programs.

So we want to focus more on self-confidence and self-expression so that kids feel more connected to their bodies and that when something doesn't feel okay, no matter what it is, they know they have the right to talk to someone about that. So we do use human rights language. Every lesson says, “I have the right to talk to a safe person” when they don't feel safe.

We also talk about the fact that not everyone has the same safe people. So I don't say, “Go tell your mom,” or “Go tell your dad,” because for all I know, that is your perpetrator. So we explore who are safe people and everyone gets to name three. We talk about why three is an important number. It's because so many people that we've worked with in our centre have told us that they told someone and they didn't listen. So I really encourage kids, through my program, that if someone doesn't listen to you the first time, maybe they're having a bad day, maybe they are not understanding you, or maybe they just can't hear you right now, so let's talk about who else we can go see.

The program has been going really well. What has been an interesting sort of by-product of it has been that it has really shifted the topic of sexual violence in our community from being very marginalized to being very central. I do staff training with Brantford fire and with Brantford police on supporting survivors of sexual violence. So we have our traditional partners from the community who are still working with us, but now we have a whole bunch of non-traditional partners.

Taylor has also been a nice jumping-off point, even when I'm working with adult populations: that you start with this nice, cute little turtle and then move into the harder discussions about sexual violence and prevention work for themselves or for their kids.

Our clients have found our program less triggering than other programs, which is another reason why we created this program. We have a website. There are songs on there and there's a cartoon on there that local high school students made. I just wanted to come here today to share with you an example of prevention that does mirror the curriculum that was brought out by the province and that has been successful. We do have it in other communities. Blind River has it within their schools. Six Nations has it within theirs. We chose a turtle because we are in the territory of Six Nations and we wanted to be respectful of our territory. Also, turtles have a built-in mechanism for safety and for alone time. The kids get that. Then we also have two tortoises that we sometimes take to classrooms for the kids to talk about the lessons and apply the lessons to our actual tortoises.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Carrie, for your presentation this morning. We have some questions for you now, beginning with our PC caucus. MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, thank you. You spoke of the non-traditional partners, like fire. I don't know if you could list some others and why you feel now they're important to engage.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: We've been working a lot with Community Living, and we never used to really work with them before.

Mr. Michael Harris: In what way? Community Living for—

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: I do my prevention work with them. Unfortunately, I'm now part—I have a new job, so we're working out something with Community Living where we can continue doing education programming with them, but I've been there for the last six years doing a modified version of Taylor.

We're stronger in the schools now. We've always had a partnership with the schools, so even a lot of our traditional partnerships have strengthened.

But I think what happens with the issue of sexual violence is that it gets marginalized and minimized and it becomes either a women's issue or a victims' issue. Taylor has helped make that a community issue instead. So Brantford fire and Brantford police—yes, Brantford police deal with sexual violence all the time but it doesn't mean that they are proactive in prevention work. I'm not

trying to discount the work that they do or anything like that, but they're our main partner on Taylor the Turtle now.

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Mr. Michael Harris: Were there any major hurdles for you when you first launched this? Getting into the schools, perhaps?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: No. We had a little bit of one with the Catholic school system, but once they understood the program, then it was fine. Even though the public school board has taken it on as their own and implemented it as their grade 1 program, the Catholic school board has approved it and there are several Catholic schools within Brantford where that's their kindergarten program.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our NDP caucus. MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for sharing that with us. It sounds like a terrific program. You mentioned that it has demonstrated some success. What are the indicators or measures that you're using to assess its effectiveness?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: That's something we struggle with all the time because prevention work is extremely difficult to evaluate. What we've been sort of relying on currently is talking with teachers after, talking with whoever is organizing that group. I've been training; I have over 200 people trained in Taylor the Turtle so I check in with them to see how it's going and if they're feeling that it's still relative to their parent groups. A lot of it is anecdotal, unfortunately, but we do go by stats. We go by media hits. We go by the activity on our website and Facebook, that type of thing, to try and figure out how effective we are.

Our presence in the community has definitely dramatically increased because now we have a giant mascot costume. Now we're in places that we were never, ever in before because a sexual assault centre was too harsh to be there, whereas Taylor the Turtle and the "My body belongs to me" message is a much gentler presence. Does that answer your question?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you; yes.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: It's something we struggle with all the time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much. I know we don't have too much time, so first I wanted to know: Has there been exploration or interest outside of the boundaries of where Taylor the Turtle is currently being offered?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Yes. Because we have the kits and we sell them at cost, we do offer to mail them. There are a few teachers in Peterborough, Niagara, Toronto and Oakville, so there are individual teachers. Because our school board has approved it, other school boards have been open to their teachers utilizing it within their own classrooms.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay. And if I go outside of Taylor, from your experience can you maybe tell me some of the services that children would need? Is it more a focus on prevention or support?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: We use it as prevention because we only counsel 16 years and older because we're funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General. In town we have two different agencies that provide counselling to children who are survivors, and they use Taylor as a therapeutic tool. So it can be used both ways. I only use it preventively, but yes, it can be used therapeutically.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and making your presentation this morning. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now as we move to our next presenters.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we have Bernice Connell and Jennifer Keddy here? These are presenters who are coming to us from Bruce and Grey and we suspect that they're in transit now.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to move ahead to our next presenters from Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union. We know that they are here and preparing, so committee members, we are going to recess for five minutes.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I know we're putting you folks ahead. Are you prepared to come forward right now? Yes, you are; I see a nodding head. Sorry. Stand down, committee members. We continue.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Are we in the military?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll be talking about that later.

Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union, please have a seat. Make yourselves comfortable. Pour yourselves some water, if you wish. You are going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee and that will be followed by questions. It's very good to see you here this morning, Christopher; I know you personally and am looking forward to your presentation this morning. Please begin by each of you stating your names and the name of the organization which you represent.

Ms. Laura Bassett: Good morning. My name is Laura Bassett. I'm the vice-president of university affairs for the Laurier students' union.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: Hi. My name is Olivia Matthews. I'm the president and CEO of the Laurier students' union.

Mr. Christopher Hyde: My name is Christopher Hyde. I'm the director of policy, research and advocacy—I think that's a very long title—also from the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union, and I'm a full-time staff support for our student leaders.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin.

Ms. Laura Bassett: Thank you. Today, we are not only speaking on behalf of the 17,000 undergraduate voices from both the Brantford and Waterloo campuses at Wilfrid Laurier University, but we also are speaking on behalf of any survivors or students who may be affected by sexual violence and harassment.

Through our support of these students, we believe that our on-the-ground and local perspective will add much value to these proceedings.

Sorry, I'm not too sure—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The mikes are very sensitive this morning, so we ask that you lean back to avoid the popping.

Ms. Laura Bassett: Okay, perfect.

In the past, student unions have played a crucial role in creating campus culture and social expectations. We are at the forefront of programming, as we provide over 1,200 volunteer positions for 800 unique volunteers. We have led processes around staff training to combat sexual violence, gendered violence and sex-based harassment, and in bystander intervention and health and protective services. We provide this training through our online portal, titled MyLearningSpace.

Due to our involvement in these issues, we strongly encourage the province to extend eligibility to student unions for any financial resources intended to support sexual violence prevention and responses, as we are currently not among the list of supported agencies.

Going forward, we are looking towards a coordinated approach to university policies on sexual violence and harassment.

First, we believe that changes need to be started from the top down and that the province needs to take a leadership position in setting clearly articulated definitions of gendered violence, sexual violence and harassment for all campuses, which you are clearly doing here today.

We believe that the province should work with community partners and sexual assault support services to adequately address the massive "grey area" that exists off-campus.

The provincial government should create requirements for universities to adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any harassment. And they should create clear guidelines around how to file complaints and to whom these complaints should be going to.

Universities should be encouraged and supported to create a single policy covering all forms of sexual violence, gendered violence and sex-based harassment. This will provide clarity and a clear definition for all members of the campus community.

Furthermore, universities should be encouraged to introduce or amend additional policy changes to the student code of conduct and the student athlete code of conduct for instances of harassment, sexual violence and gendered violence. This should include a zero tolerance policy at all campus venues for any time of violence or

harassment, as well as providing specialized training to all staff who are working where alcohol is involved.

In conclusion, universities should continue to update and review these policies with other community agencies to ensure effective performance and adherence. Everyone has a responsibility to this issue. However, we are looking to the provincial government for leadership and commitment to new policy practices for our students and the broader community.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: Policy, procedure and clearly defined terms regarding sexual violence and harassment are the foundations; however, education and training are the tools to empower both students and staff to speak up and respond. When we educate students about sexual violence in university, we hold them to a standard even after they leave our institution.

It is the responsibility of the university and its affiliates to ensure students feel safe and feel valued. By adopting training surrounding sex-based harassment, we as an institution can ensure students are able to take a stance against gendered violence. This is not a specific department's dilemma, nor is it a specific university's, although we speak as Laurier. It is an entire institution's and an entire province's responsibility, and therefore training opportunities must be widespread.

While training staff is crucial in responding to a disclosure, it is just as important, if not more, to reach out to students. We study at university as students; it should not be a difficult task to learn a culture that has a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment. Students learn curriculums consistently; they need to have the opportunity to engage in a curriculum of consent.

While education and training opportunities come into play, it is just as important to evaluate their effectiveness. Annual climate surveys that assess students' knowledge regarding sexual harassment, sexual violence, retaliation, if students know how to report such conduct, and even students' experiences with sexual violence, help create an enhanced system and process every year as we continue.

1020

They need to be educated on the consequences of their actions—whether that's criminal, academic or more—the inexcusability of any such conduct but, most importantly, they need to learn that their university has systems and policies in place to support and protect them if they were ever to witness or be a survivor of sexual assault, sex-based discrimination and gendered violence.

Students must be at the forefront of the discussion, as without the proper tools and funds to empower them as bystanders or survivors, campus culture will never shift. Gendered violence will continue to be swept under the rug and there will no longer be such a push for these policies like that sitting in this room today.

Soliciting student input throughout the process but especially in training them in how to report and educating them on what consent looks like is the only way to change culture.

Far beyond educating our students is earning their trust. With the conversations again being held in this

room today, we can tell that students are frustrated with the lack of process and support given to these topics. Every student, whether they are a survivor, perpetrator or bystander, has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

The key to disclosure is a compassionate response. While we need to be prioritizing prevention on campus through our education efforts, supporting the healing of those who have experienced sexual violence must also be a priority.

A compassionate response includes eliminating hostile environments for students, which could encompass changing residence rooms, switching their class schedule or even academic accommodation. The support extends further than simply being flexible. We need to make disclosure as easy as possible by providing accurate information on how to file a criminal report and how to find university and local services. The rights of the survivor, including whether or not they wish to proceed with an inquiry or report, must always be at the discretion of the survivor.

The university must not respond in a way that waits for the conclusion of a criminal investigation—it's too late for a student's semester or year at that point. The university should be administering an inquiry and protecting the complainant throughout the entire process.

Showing compassion to survivors by creating a safe space for them to learn and live is the response that universities should be taking across the province. I am pretty sick of not being able to speak up or shamed into silence.

Having a well-known process, garnering confidentiality and speaking out against sexual violence should be what all universities are doing already. We're incredibly lucky to be a part of an institution—which will be speaking later—which is already taking the steps to become such a university, but there is still much work to be done.

Mr. Christopher Hyde: I'd like to thank my colleagues and our student leaders for coming here and speaking with us today. I think they bring a powerful perspective.

Olivia, our president, has been a don all four years that she has been on campus, aside from her first year in residence, and has had an active presence living in residence and dealing with these issues that students face on a yearly basis. I want to thank them for coming forward and thank this committee.

What I'm going to speak next on is—we refer to this as our unpolished gem, and that is asking the committee to look at the Residential Tenancies Act and the intersection it's going to have with sexual violence and harassment. We call it our unfinished gem because we're not policy experts. We try to be, but we're not. We often come up against areas where other acts or other pieces of legislation interact with sexual violence and harassment, and we'd like to see some form of change.

I want to talk today about one such example, and I want to tell you why I'm talking about this example. We have the Student Rights Advisory Committee at the

Laurier students' union, and what we do is, we work to represent students on a number of issues dealing with academic, community crises, legal crises, but also issues around landlord-tenant.

Something that's coming up and is starting to emerge for us is the challenge that students have when they are victims of sexual violence or harassment within the university campus community, and I think there's something important to note here. When you come to university, you live away from home and you live in the university community, you are joining a network and a foundation that is brand new to you. You are creating links, you are meeting people, and you are joining a small community that is usually not your own and is far from your home.

When you are a victim of sexual violence and harassment, you can be torn out and ripped away from that new community that you've formed, and it can be especially traumatic to students who are living in that.

One thing that we've seen—and I'm going to bring a perspective from one of our students who came to us this year. She came to us early on in the year and she said, "I need some help with a landlord-tenant issue." We said, "What can we do? Is it a lease? Is it a key deposit?" She said, "I'm under constant threat of sexual harassment and violence in my own home and I cannot get out of my lease." I said, "What do you mean you can't get out of your lease? Are there no provisions in the Residential Tenancies Act or in your agreement or when you feel at risk?" She said, "I have filed complaints with the landlord and with the police. I do not know who else to talk to. I do not know what else to do." We tried to follow up and provide support to that student as best we could, keeping in mind that we are a student union. We tried to work with community partners and university partners. In the end, that student was forced—or made the choice to vacate those premises and find another place to live. There were issues of financial precarity alone—that was an excessive financial burden. This student was unable to break the lease, and this really is the point of intersection that I'm coming to speak of here today.

In our experience, when a student is under a threat of sexual violence or harassment, or they are a victim, in many cases they're forced to live in the small university communities in which we reside in close proximity, or adjacent, or even in the same building or, heaven forbid, even in the same apartment with the perpetrator. That, to us, was unacceptable and it was frightening. We weren't really sure at the time what we could do. We said we would continue to bring this forward, and that's why we bring this idea forward today.

The idea and what we've put forward in the brief that we submitted on behalf of the Laurier students' union is not complete and it doesn't have all the answers, but one of the things that we'd like to see is the Residential Tenancies Act looked at, or some amendment looked at, that would allow for victims of sexual violence and harassment to find a way to terminate their lease early. Some of the provisions that force them into a situation where they can't break that lease—again, through finan-

cial considerations, it may be difficult or it might just be impossible for them to move. So we would hope that there would be considerations.

We put forward the idea that they would be able to use documentation or information from the police. We recognize that that, in and of itself, is challenging. Going to your landlord with a document that says, "I'm a victim of sexual violence or harassment and I need to get out of my lease"—we understand that that's not an acceptable thing to ask. That's why we said this is unfinished and unpolished. We wonder if there could perhaps be a blanket document that police or others could provide for victims of gendered violence, sexual violence and domestic violence.

I know Bill 22 was brought up a number of years ago. It was an act to amend the Residential Tenancies act for victims of domestic violence. We wonder if something can be brought to the table that would allow victims of sexual violence and harassment, gendered violence and domestic violence to be able to terminate their lease early when there is this situation where there is a constant threat, or when they're forced to live in an environment adjacent or near to their attacker.

We do understand that there are going to be realities for landlords and all people involved, and police and extra burdens. However, in the cases and the people we've spoken to, when we've had students come to us begging for help in getting out of their leases and being able to move away from a building where an incident occurred or a building where they're under the constant threat of sexual harassment, we felt that the least we could do was bring this idea forward to the committee in whatever form.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Do you have any concluding remarks to make? Ready for your questions?

Ms. Laura Bassett: We'd just like to thank you for this opportunity to speak. It's something that we're very passionate about at Laurier, and I feel as though we are taking the charge in protecting our students in being here today.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus, from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much, Olivia, Laura, and Chris, obviously, for being here. I think it's so important that student voices come to this committee. Your provincial associations have done that as well.

The stats that came out of the media reports in the early fall: Around one in four students experiences sexual assault or violence on campus. Was that surprising to you when you heard it?

Ms. Olivia Matthews: I would say no, and quite frankly, I would say it's higher.

Ms. Laura Bassett: I would say that it's not necessarily surprising, just because I don't think that we have a clearly defined definition of what constitutes sexual assault, so students don't necessarily believe they've been sexually assaulted until you give them a broad definition of what it encompasses.

Ms. Catherine Fife: So this is that culture that you're talking about, though. I think that's really important for us to delve into.

Thank you for also raising the issue of dedicated resources for reporting, because the clarity has to be there and it has to be a clear path as well. I just wanted to thank you. Thank you for the work that you're also doing on campus.

The issue of residency and safe places to live is a huge issue. Finding accommodation, actually, is also a big issue, so thank you once again.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: I just want to acknowledge what Christopher just said. It's very important. I think yesterday I brought up a point that the aftermath for the perpetrator and the victim doesn't equate to the notion of justice that we seek. So I hear you, and this is what this committee is looking at across the government, to see what could be done across the ministries.

1030

My question is, in your mind, what are the major contributors to sexual assaults on campus? And any comments on how the policy has been rolling out at the colleges and universities? Because that's part of the requirement of the action plan.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: By "contributors," do you mean just contributors to helping the process?

Mr. Han Dong: Why is it happening? Why are the numbers so high? Why are there so many victims?

Ms. Olivia Matthews: I believe it's because—on campus again going back to Laura, it's the clearly defined term. I can say it quite bluntly here: Sexual violence doesn't always mean rape, and I feel like students on campus believe that sexual harassment can only be rape. So when we're talking about gendered violence on campus, it's that we don't have a definition. We're coming into university not ever really having had a conversation about consent. Then all of a sudden we're trying to be adults and we don't understand what that looks like yet.

But I think the biggest issue there would be that on both sides, on the perpetrator's side and then on the survivor's side, we're not sure what sexual violence looks like and therefore we don't speak up when it happens.

Mr. Han Dong: Good.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing here today. You brought up good topics.

It's going to take a while to change a culture and the fact that, predominantly, men can treat women the way they do. So right now, how do we educate everyone going into university that this is zero tolerance, beyond a poster campaign? Do you have any recommendations for that?

Ms. Laura Bassett: I don't necessarily know if it's a culture that will just exist forever.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Not forever, but for right now. We're working on changing it.

Ms. Laura Bassett: I think it really stems from the top down. Like we all kind of said before, I think it comes from a definition of what sexual assault is, and policies that are clear and defined as to what zero tolerance looks like—so if there is an allegation of sexual assault in a residence, there is a zero-tolerance policy for that occurring, and there will be procedures set out to investigate those instances and not just pushing it aside.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: Also, we're okay, as a students' union, taking responsibility for helping students in their transition for university. So during orientation, having a speaker about sexual consent, and continuing that as an ongoing process throughout your years—it shouldn't just be when you're in first year. It should be always and hitting all years of the university.

I think the university has to take a lot of responsibility, but again, I agree with Laura that it will have to be a top-down approach from the government to say, "You have to have these certain steps taken," in order for us to even get there and help the peer-to-peer.

Mr. Christopher Hyde: And it's about having that conversation when someone comes to university, I think. When they come to the campus community, there is a great deal of discussion at length on the standards of, "You show up to class at this time," or "You show up to this to collect your money or to pay your money." We need to start having conversations around sexual violence, harassment and consent at the same time, when they come to the campus community, and say, "If you're going to be part of this campus community, we need to ensure that you understand and replicate these ideas."

I think Laura and Olivia have touched on it brilliantly. From our end, that involves tying things into orientation—so maybe not just a speaker. Maybe we have a couple of sessions where we talk to students: "What does consent look like? What does harassment look like?" I completely agree with Olivia that we have not properly defined harassment for perpetrators and victims. We need to be clear on what constitutes that and then to build it into our culture going forward. I mean, if we have establishments on campus, we enforce our zero tolerance and we stand behind that and try to change the culture slowly, and, as small players in the wider campus community, try to have that effect over time.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: For the change in culture specifically, it needs to be widespread across the university. For instance, you can't just have one support centre on campus that's for sexual assault. You need to be able to go anywhere on campus, anywhere that you feel the most comfortable, whether that's where you live in residence or whether that's the students' union. We need to be trained properly on how to respond to that type of disclosure and who to lead them to.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Excellent. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for coming in and informing our committee today of the work that you are doing. We invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

MR. WAYNE MORRIS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I call on our next presenter to come forward, and that is Wayne Morris with the Wilfrid Laurier criminology department. Good morning, Wayne. Very nice to see you.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Good morning. Nice to be here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please make yourself comfortable. If you'd like a glass of water, by all means pour a cup for yourself. Wayne, you're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee and that will be followed by some questions for you. Please start by stating your name and the organization that you represent, and begin any time.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Good morning, everyone. My name is Wayne Morris. I'm an instructor at Wilfrid Laurier University.

I understand that you have already received and will be receiving some very compelling stories and experiences. What I think I can do, if anything, to assist your committee is to speak on more of an evidence-based, decision-making approach, giving you some information based upon my readings and my experience as a practitioner in criminal justice and now as an academic in, I guess, my third career.

Prior to joining Wilfrid Laurier University, I was employed in correctional services for 30 years in both Alberta and Ontario correctional services. I have been in charge of treatment programs, including programs for sex offenders. I've been the superintendent of a number of major facilities and the area manager of probation and parole for Wellington, Bruce and Grey counties, including a number of programs for sex offenders. I redesigned the classification and placement system for the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services to make placements of offenders within the Ontario system. I'm also a former administrator at Conestoga College, where I designed the community and criminal justice degree program.

One of the classes I teach at Laurier is on the psychology of crime. As I understand it, your mandate is to attempt to reduce sexual assaults and determine how best to care for victims. I think my best contribution to your objective is to speak to you today of what causes men to commit sexual assaults and what are the characteristics of victims. I will purposely not discuss sexual assaults on children, as the motivators and characteristics of those labelled as pedophiles are vastly different from those who assault older girls and women. However, you'll note that often, statistically, these two groups overlap. I will also make some suggestions regarding how to prevent sexual assaults, and I will share with you some insights and recommendations gathered from my students. After my presentation, I'm open to any questions. As I present, I will not make reference to my footnotes, but I have submitted my presentation.

What are the characteristics of men who commit sexual assaults? Sex offenders come from all levels of society. They differ in background, race, religion, cul-

ture, personality, attitudes, interpersonal skills etc. You just can't identify a sex offender by looking at them.

However, using statistics from the United States—and these are most likely the statistics that are most broken down, and they are similar in Canada—we can conclude that most sexual assaults are committed by men less than 25 years of age. They often have a criminal record which is very broad and is not restricted to assaults on women. Indeed, they often have a history of non-sexual aggression on both genders. What is particularly noteworthy is that they always share a similar attitude; that is, that men should be dominant and women should be submissive.

These men also have what is labelled as cognitive-perceptual distortions in communication; that is, they have misconceptions of verbal and non-verbal communication. They have erroneous perceptions of sexual behaviour and misinterpret women's behaviour as flirtatious and a come-on when there was no intention to give that message on behalf of the women. These men—and some women—buy into what is referred to as "rape culture," where rape is normalized and accepted.

Behaviour is learned. I emphasize this to my students over and over: Behaviour is learned. Often, these men have learned this behaviour by what they have seen at home or learned from others whose opinions they valued. Violent, abusive behaviour is learned to be normal and acceptable. That's not to say that all victims of sexual abuse as children or those who see violence towards women will become perpetrators of sexual violence. It is an accumulation of risks and predisposition factors that lead to this and all types of offending.

1040

There have been some links shown between men viewing violent pornography with sexual assaults. It is important to differentiate this type of porn that depicts the violence and the degradation of women with erotica depicting sexual contact between consenting adults.

There have been a number of different systems of classifying sexual offenders. A very detailed and thorough system is employed at the Massachusetts Treatment Center, which is located in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. This may be of interest to you if you wanted to do some further work in that area.

However, for the purposes of your project a more simplified system developed by Groth may be just as useful. While the term "rape" was replaced in Canada with the term "sexual assault" in 1983, as an American, Groth uses the term "rape." You'll notice in the literature that it often continues to be used in American literature and it varies from state to state.

Groth notes: "Rape is never the result simply of sexual arousal that has no other opportunity for gratification.... Rape is always a symptom of some psychological dysfunction." He notes that "Rape is always and foremost an aggressive act." He classifies different types of rape dependent upon the mixture and prevalence of anger, power and sadism. Often, these characteristics are learned through various experiences.

The victims: Who do these men sexually assault? Primarily it is youth. The American National Violence

Against Women Survey conducted in 1998 and discussed by Tjaden and Thoennes in 2000 noted that: 29% of forcible rapes occurred when the victim was less than 11 years old—29%; 32% of forcible rapes took place when the victims were between 11 and 17; 22% between 18 and 24—then it starts to drop off drastically: 7% between 25 and 29; and only 6% when they were older than 29.

The peak age for a victim of sexual assault is actually 15. That is kind of constant across the US and Canada. Usually the victim knew the person who committed the assault. Kilpatrick et al. examined the same study and noted that: 21.9% were husbands or ex-husbands; 19.5% were boyfriends or ex-boyfriends; 9.8% were relatives; 14.6% were friends or neighbours; and only 24.4% were strangers. To a certain extent a lot of our theories about stranger danger, while very evident and scary—we may want to be spending our resources and our attention on people where the victims were known and had a relationship with the victimizer.

In a 1993 study of 125 US college women, Frintner and Robinson noted that 83% of the women who were sexually assaulted said the attacker was someone they knew and, interestingly, it happened in their first year of post-secondary education when they may have been a little bit more naive.

It should also be noted that alcohol often plays a role in cases where force is used, as well as when the victim is incapacitated. Also, for some unexplained reason, victims seem to be especially vulnerable to future attacks.

Of particular interest is that some victims seem to fail to perceive risks. Some victims either think they are at a lower risk than their peers of being sexually assaulted or do not recognize that a particular situation poses a threat. Therefore they are often more vulnerable in their first years at post-secondary institutions.

Imagine the situation: If you start with a young male who has learned that men should be dominant and women submissive, especially if they were raised around a rape culture and they may have viewed violent, degrading pornography, and you pair them up with a woman or a girl who may be particularly insensitive to those risks, you have a dangerous situation. If you add alcohol, the risk becomes amplified. Again, post-secondary education: people away from home, experimenting with alcohol and perhaps not being as wise in the ways of the world as they think they are.

So what do we do to reduce sexual assault? While treatment programs for victims are important and I do not want to diminish those—even treatment programs to address the criminogenic thinking of offenders have merit, and there are some out there—most importantly, we need to change male attitudes towards women. And we can change attitudes and influence culture. When I was a teenager, drinking and driving was quite acceptable. Driving without your seat belt wasn't considered a big deal. But now, most young people frown on that practice. So attitudes can change.

We can reduce rape culture and influence male attitudes toward women, and the best place to start is

through education. Remember that most men who commit sexual assaults are less than 25 years of age and most female victims are young.

I used the opportunity, as part of my psychology of crime class, to get input from that age group. Having 135 young people in their late teens and early 20s, I asked my psychology of crime students for their suggestions. I want to point out that this was after we had gone over basic psychology of what causes crime, what attitudes, and basic learning theory. The vast majority of these young university students stressed the importance of educating youth and the public at large. They spoke of changing attitudes and stopping the spread of rape culture. Many emphasized that elementary students—some who come from very violent homes—need to learn that violence is not normal and that both genders deserve respect. They noted that only when women are seen as equals to men can a change in attitude and culture take place.

So we need to change male attitudes, but as some of the female students noted, we need to change female attitudes as well. Women cannot condone rape culture. If you've seen some of the incidents, especially at a certain east coast university where the women were chanting along with the men certain comments in their frosh activities, we know that some women can buy into this. And women need to become more self-aware. Both young men and young women need to appreciate what constitutes a healthy relationship.

I would like to quote one of my students. In a very quick assignment at the end of my class on this topic, I asked everyone to make a submission, and this is her quick comment, but I thought it was insightful. She said, "Speaking from personal experience, young girls need to be educated on the warning signs and specifically about concepts of love and trust and healthy relationships. Learning what a healthy relationship is early on will lay a foundation for how women and girls look for potential boyfriends/girlfriends; learning what acceptable behaviour is and what verges on the lines of controlling, manipulating, extreme jealousy and unwanted behaviours, and cues as to when to leave a dangerous situation. Girls need to learn that you can't change a man through 'love,' and that if your relationship is not healthy, move on. Most sex assaults occur by an acquaintance. Let's make sure girls know how to spot a good friend and one who is not."

So the bottom line to reduce sexual assaults is we need to change male attitudes so they are not assaultive, and because we can't be completely successful, we must also educate females so they will not become victims.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Wayne, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Mr. Wayne Morris: The best method to do so is through education. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You were almost near the end. I should have held my breath.

Mr. Wayne Morris: You didn't have my copy.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We would like to see your copy, if you don't mind handing it in to us.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Yes. Mr. Short has copies.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our first question for you is from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Wayne. You and I worked together a long time at the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, so we really understand the whole concept behind root causes of crime and root causes of sexual assault. I'd like you to just continue along that as to how we address the root cause of male attitudes so that they're not assaultive.

1050

Mr. Wayne Morris: Again, it's learned behaviour. When you have a culture that says that it's okay to be macho and to be physically aggressive towards a woman, it's the attitudinal behaviour that you have to address. It's learned behaviour. Through the school system, we have to expose those people. If you look at all violence and a lot of the psychology of violence, it's learned. It's because the children come from homes where they have seen abuse, where they find that if they're physically assaultive to other youth, it gets them what they want. They have to learn that it's not appropriate and that you can be a man and you can be macho and you can be attractive to women by other methods than being physically assaultive.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing here—excellent presentation. We heard a lot yesterday especially about pornography, and that young boys start looking at 11. I don't know if you can speak to pornography specifically. If you as a child are at home, you see dad being disrespectful to mom, violence, and build on maybe pornography—whatever you see on social media or video games or wherever you get that input—they come to school, and we're trying to educate how to respect others, what healthy relationships are. I don't know if I'm asking a very deep question, but that child is going to be very mixed up—

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Confused.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —and confused. What happens? What should we be looking at? We're not solving all the problems today, I know, but what should we be looking at for that situation that may occur?

Mr. Wayne Morris: I think we have to be very thoughtful in our approaches, for instance, to our education system. I do think that the new sex education system is a step in the right direction.

I'm not an expert on the topic, and I don't want to go into that in detail. If you're not careful, if you say, "All of this is wrong," and you become too controlling, you'll get a backlash. What we have to show to children is that consenting sexual activity is appropriate.

If you're talking about pornography, we have to differentiate between degrading behaviour and, frankly, some of the bondage and violence—I'm not going to go into some of the more newsworthy activities of certain radio announcers recently. If that behaviour is consenting, who cares? But where it becomes a problem is when the women are abused.

If you want to be coldly scientific about this, what happens is, there's a link between the sexual stimulation of seeing that and the sexual gratification that those men get by basically masturbation. There is a click, physically and psychologically, when they associate that pleasurable experience with viewing pornography and having been started on that road by the normalization of that through violence at home and through their peer group. That becomes reinforced, and it becomes quite acceptable in gratification—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. I'm sorry; I'm just going to move you along. Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation. Yesterday, in Windsor, we heard an excellent presentation—yours was excellent, too—from a professor at the University of Windsor who sort of categorized programs into preventing men from assaulting, helping women to resist or recognize the risks, and then empowering bystanders.

I wondered if your research has come up with any kinds of conclusions about the effectiveness of those three programs. She, at the University of Windsor, was focusing on empowering bystanders to respond effectively when they see these kinds of situations.

Ms. Wayne Morris: I'm not familiar with that particular research, but I can tell you that, generally speaking, on a lot of behaviours, the empowering of bystanders is a very important step. As Kathryn McGarry is familiar, with the crime prevention council, we've been very involved with a program on improving behaviour on social media. One of the things that we've found is, it's that bystander behaviour that is most likely to intervene successfully. You've got a group who are victims and a group who are causing that problem. The victims, you can strengthen. It's hard to address directly abusive behaviour. But with those people who are observers, they can speak up and say, "That's not acceptable." I know that the social media program has been very successful in having their peers intervene and say, "That's not cool."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Wayne Morris, I want to thank you, with the committee, this morning for hearing from you, your information that you have provided for us. It's good to see you, and we invite you, if you wish, to join our audience to take in the rest of the presentations.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, MPP Scott?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to make one comment, because I know we talked a little bit about it. On CBC last night, on Media Watch, they profiled what Shauna Hunt had done, the reporter that took on the aggressor. Anyway, I just put that out there. I know there's a CBC reporter in the room. But it was excellent. I actually watched it twice last night. It was very good. So anyway, I just put that out there for information for you.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Laurie, I'll add to that, I was surprised that not only did they do one seg-

ment, they went to a commercial break, they came back and they still had the panel and they continued. There was so much to say about the issue, wasn't there?

Ms. Laurie Scott: With their own reporters discussing their experiences—it was incredible. Then, the panel was doing their feedback of what they've seen over the years. It really is something to have a look at.

Ms. Marie-France Lalonde: CBC?

Ms. Laurie Scott: CBC, and I believe it was Media Watch. It was last night, part of The National news.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And those of us who have worked in the media—I could certainly have added a few stories.

WOMEN'S HOUSE SERVING BRUCE AND GREY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call now on our next presenters with the Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey.

Good morning, ladies, and thank you very much for coming here from Owen Sound this morning. Please begin by stating your names. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee. That will be followed by questions. Start any time.

Ms. Jennifer Keddy: My name is Jennifer Keddy.

Ms. Bernice Connell: I'm Bernice Connell.

Ms. Jennifer Keddy: We represent the sexual assault services program of Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey, operating from Kincardine and Owen Sound. Between us, we have spent 50 years supporting sexual abuse/assault survivors and working to end violence against women and children. We applaud the Ontario-wide action plan, It's Never Okay, and appreciate the opportunity to speak to the select committee today.

Statistics on the rates of sexual assault are clear. Given that at least one in three women will experience some form of sexual assault, it is fair to say that virtually all of us knows someone who has been assaulted, whether or not they have disclosed this to you. What we present today is informed by many courageous women who have survived sexual assault and harassment and have shared their stories and journeys.

There is a reason why individuals who have experienced sexual violence are called survivors. Imagine a child surviving ongoing sexual abuse by a family member or multiple members. Imagine not being believed when you finally told someone and instead being blamed for what happened to you and feeling responsible for your family falling apart. Women carry the shame of being abused into adulthood and often cope for years in isolation. However women may cope with what's happened to them, we recognize the strength and resilience it takes to survive.

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Many who do reach out for help are met with a lack of understanding of sexual assault, minimization of the impact of the abuse and often by outright disbelief. The systems women navigate when they come forward,

although intended as support, usually have additional roles such as investigation, medical response, evidence collection, addiction treatment and mental health assessments that can eclipse women's needs. Women can feel revictimized when helpers aren't aware of the long-term effects of trauma or when the parameters or limitations of any given service take priority.

I note that young people face many challenges today in our highly sexualized popular culture—overarching pressure of social needs that send confusing and desensitizing messages of women's lives being worth nothing more than sex.

Extensive ongoing training with a gender analysis of violence and led by women's sexual assault advocates is required for all service sectors providing support to survivors. A better understanding of trauma is needed, as well as awareness of how trauma intersects with addictions, mental health, poverty, racism and oppression. Most times, the traumas of sexual assault are the very seeds of these social patterns and problems.

Very few women report to police the sexual violence or harassment they experience—as few as 10%. Of the 10% who do report, the majority of cases will not proceed to court and obviously even fewer will result in conviction. Most women are not willing to put themselves through a process that still feels like victim blaming and that often holds her more accountable than the perpetrator.

Too much of the province's resources are directed at the criminal justice system when so few survivors access the courts. Can we just stop asking why women do not report and, instead, focus on what is most helpful?

Survivors are resilient but healing must take place on their own time schedule and by their own direction. By this, we mean that women are the experts in their own lives and with information, support and advocacy are able to make the best decisions for themselves.

Sexual assault and rape crisis centres provide support to women who have been recently assaulted and to those who are coping with historic abuse whether or not they have reported to police. Women must be believed and helped to understand the social context in which violence occurs. They must receive advocacy when needed and cannot be limited in the number of counselling sessions available to them.

We support stable and adequate funding for sexual assault and rape crisis centres. We enthusiastically support It's Never Okay and its directives regarding public education and the integration of information about sexual consent and healthy relationships into the school curriculum. This focus will be the best way to prevent sexual violence.

We ask the committee and the Ontario government to commit to support the action plan and ensure its implementation is guided by women's advocates.

Thank you again for this opportunity to continue this most important work of ending violence against women.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Will you be presenting?

Ms. Bernice Connell: I guess I would just like to say, in response to the previous speaker, the important message that we can get to young men—and as encouraging as it is that those discussions are happening and recognizing that it's a confusing time for young people, I think the messages of "Ask" and "Don't rape" are very simple.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for coming all this way from Bruce-Grey. We really appreciate your dedication—cumulatively 50 years helping women. I can't express my gratefulness enough to you.

We've heard through the committee—you've said this morning also that we have to do a better job of helping survivors. We have heard of the difficulties of the justice system, the revictimization when women have to tell their stories.

Are there any examples that you have in your area where you've hopefully seen improvements as time has gone on that you could recommend—say, best practices or even a story that did not work out well, that would highlight what is wrong?

Ms. Bernice Connell: I know that too much of our time is spent helping women navigate those systems—way too much time. We've been working for three or four years with the mental health sector and the addictions sector specifically with the No Wrong Door initiative. That has helped. It has helped improve it if the front-line workers are connected with each other. They're assisting women by making the connections for them with these other services, and if management up the line is supportive. I just think that our biggest problem is that women aren't believed and they're busy trying to cope with the limitations and criteria of other services. Of course, we see a lot of women who have certainly been revictimized, especially by the psychiatric system and the legal system.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for coming to speak to the committee. I was really struck by your comment about the need to stop asking why women don't report and instead ask what they need to heal. There is a lot of focus on the justice system and getting more women to report and putting that into that very expensive and hurtful system for women. I wondered if you wanted to comment more about what women need to heal. We've heard previously at this committee that not always laying charges is going to be helpful to a woman's eventual healing and that there are alternative kinds of approaches that are more respectful of what a woman needs to feel supported. Can you talk about your own experiences?

Ms. Bernice Connell: I can speak about our sector, the violence-against-women sector. Our expertise comes from women who have survived abuse and violence. We learn from them. Women are defining what works for them, and that's helping us create some expertise. I think

that rape crisis and sexual assault centres are leading-edge in terms of the response to women. It helps if you have an analysis of gender and violence, if you believe women, if you support them in what they identify as important for themselves, and again, help with labels they may have received or coping mechanisms that they're working through around alcoholism or any kind of addiction.

Do you want to add anything to that?

Ms. Jennifer Keddy: Yes. I'm thinking, too, because of that expertise that we have in that area: bringing us to the table for the high-risk teams that are out there. We're not at those tables. We've been excluded from those tables. Bringing us to those tables to hear from us, training in the justice system—having us do that training because we have that expertise directly from the women—and bringing on board survivors to be part of those initiatives, I think, would go a long way in that healing process and what they're looking for.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you. Thank you so much for your presentation. I wanted to ask you a little bit more about what your opinions are on the distinction between sexual violence and domestic violence. We hear a lot about how the two shouldn't be different. What are your thoughts on that?

Ms. Bernice Connell: Thanks for the question. It's a great question because we, in the sexual violence sector, feel like the poor cousins, usually, at any table where we're talking about violence in our communities. It's much easier to talk about domestic assault and domestic violence because people understand the need for safety and shelter. It's not very easy to talk about sexual violence; it makes people really uncomfortable. Frankly, some of the horror that women go through is just too hard to hear, I think. We get that it's all violence against women and we are certainly allies with our sisters who work in the domestic violence sector, but we need bigger visibility.

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That is what's exciting about this initiative. It's really exciting what the Ontario government has done in terms of the bystander public messages—I think they are really, really great—that draw the line where it's encouraging people to just put themselves in a situation and open up a discussion about what they might do. So it's a really tricky one, but thanks. That's a great question.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Bernice and Jennifer, I want to thank you very much for your journey all the way here from Owen Sound this morning, and for sharing your information with us. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience.

GUELPH-WELLINGTON
WOMEN IN CRISIS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I now call on our next presenter, from the Guelph-Wellington Women in

Crisis centre. Please make yourself comfortable. We're getting you a glass in case you want to pour yourself some water.

You're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by some questions. Please begin by stating your name and your organization. Begin any time.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: Jessica St. Peter from Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis.

My name is Jessica and I'm presenting on behalf of Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis, an umbrella organization that deals with violence against women and children. As the public educator for Women in Crisis for the last five years, I'm here to speak to my experiences working in the violence-against-women sector from a prevention perspective, and my experiences as a physically able, white, cis woman living in Ontario.

There are various reasons that people enter this sector, that people choose to work every day with women who are survivors of violence. My entrance into this field was directed by my own lived experience, the women mentors in my life, and the challenges of being a young woman in our province. Why does someone dedicate their life to prevention work? We do it for the survivors, the women who have shared their stories today, the other women around our province who you've heard from before, and those who continue to suffer in silence.

Three generations of women within my family have been impacted by the effects of domestic violence and sexual violence, none of which were reported to the police, for a complex array of reasons. The struggles that these women have faced, and have continued to face, are impacting their lives, their children, and future generations. I wanted to be a part of providing a safer space for individuals to be heard, believed and supported in their lives, but most importantly, to be a part of ending gender-based violence. It was because of the openness, honesty and information that was shared within my own family and the privileges that I was born into that I have been equipped to continue the work that we do at Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis.

The ability to sit here and speak to you is a privilege, and I am aware that it is the voices that you are not hearing today that we need to be aware of. We need to be equipped to explore the intersections of oppression that marginalize women and girls who may not feel this is a safe forum to share their stories, or may not have a safe ear to share their story with.

As a graduate of a gender equality and social justice program, it is upsetting to hear of the decreased funding for women's studies and gender studies across our province, because it was at this institution that my eyes were opened. It was where I gained the experiences and information that equipped me with the language and knowledge to work towards the prevention of violence against women and girls. From the moment I entered my first gender class, systemic issues and sexual assault were forever connected for me. Similarly, the stories you hear today, and that our audience members will hear—when

you listen, actually listen, to the stories of survivors, you open a door and step into a world that you cannot turn back from. Because of this, I continue advocating for survivors of sexual violence and aim to work myself out of a job before retirement.

As you sit here and listen to the experiences of survivors and the organizations and advocates that have dedicated their time and limited resources to providing the support in working towards a response, I am reminding you that we all have a responsibility, and you have political leadership in our province. I'm glad you're here to listen. We all have an important role to play. We need to work alongside survivors and their allies and advocates to consider how to fix and create systems that support them. Forums like this are so crucial to the work as we take our steps towards change together.

Today, I'm here to speak to some recommendations concerning systems, and I will also give recommendations about aiming to support survivors better. We need to move beyond the question of what will encourage more women to report, because that question is not reflective of the information and guidance we are in need of. Instead, I think we need to ask what will better support survivors of sexual violence. What do survivors need most and what will help us to prevent sexual violence from happening?

For over 37 years, Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis has been listening, supporting, advocating and working towards the end of gender-based violence. We are a feminist community-based organization providing services to women and their children around issues of women abuse and sexual violence. We believe our services must be inclusive and equitable for all individuals while being responsive to issues of race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and our abilities.

Our programs include Marianne's Place, a shelter that provided homes to over 150 women and 90 children in the last fiscal year; a transitional and housing support program that supported over 850 women from our community; a family court support program that supported over 200 women last year; our sexual assault centre that supported over 150 women; a 24-hour crisis line that took over 3,000 calls; and a public education program that presented over 250 sessions within Guelph and Wellington county.

There are no fees to any of the services that Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis offers. As stated earlier today, survivors should not experience additional financial burdens as a result of their victimization. They are not to blame.

Over a one-year period, the Ministry of the Attorney General found that Ontario's 30 sexual assault centre agencies responded to 37,000 crisis-line calls. These calls are from our community members, the individuals who may or may not ever reach out to the criminal justice system. The individuals whom you hear from today are just a sample of those calls, just a portion of the stories that are often unheard and would leave us in awe.

We believe that sexual violence cannot be separated from the broader context, one in which the survivor, the offender and the violence itself exist in a larger system of societal norms and inequalities. Consider, for example: In my own life, the women I refer to knew their perpetrators. The women we support are often shamed and revictimized when they attempt to reach out. The women we work with are scrutinized, not believed and continually violated. Quite often, folks are not aware of the laws or what would happen when you report to the police. It is unfortunate that, too often, the lived experiences of our folks leave them feeling that the laws, the law enforcers and the law creators do not care about or believe them.

The over 1,500 women who have accessed our services, when available, can have access to a women's advocate or worker who can help prepare them for these, can help tell them what to expect when they call the police, explain why the police officer may or may not ask certain questions, advocate for more action on her case and most importantly, empower them to advocate for their own rights throughout the process.

As an agency and member of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, we support the recommendations of our sister centres whom you've heard from today. Education and public discussion on sexual violence supports prevention. We believe that education is the best way to prevent sexual violence. Public education promotes a focus on prevention of sexual assault as opposed to catching and imprisoning offenders. Imprisoning offenders does not end gender-based violence; it's just a piece of the puzzle.

Yes, I'm sure we're all here because we wish to see less sexual victimization more than anything else, and prevention strategies can take on various forms. We work towards supporting women and children to understand their rights; for women and men to understand the spectrum of sexual violence and expand the concept of sexual assault to explore that continuum; and supporting women and men to be exposed to and have opportunities to challenge sexual assault myths and learn the facts that debunk them.

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We are dedicated to educating bystanders to better understand how to recognize sexual violence, intervene and support someone who is or might be targeted by sexual violence. This prevention strategy has been a focus of the campaign mentioned previously, Draw the Line, an amazing public education campaign that has been designed to equip our community members with the skills and resources to be a part of that change, to have the skills to act when their gut tells them something is wrong.

Public educators across our province draw connections between systemic issues such as societal attitudes that justify, tolerate, normalize and minimize sexual violence against women and girls. They make connections about the attitudes and factors that contribute to rape culture, and they connect it with the reality of women's day-to-day lived experiences. The educators from across our

province would not even fill this room, yet these are the people whom we rely on to do the work for our entire province. Educators like myself need the support of our government and need to be validated. The amazing programs that have been presented today such as MAASV and Taylor the Turtle have been created by these organizations. They've been moved forward, and they're the kind of initiatives that need to be supported.

The move to integrate information on sexual consent and healthy relationships and online sexual activity into the school curriculum is much needed and greatly supported. We applaud this move by Ontario's government. It's about time that we talk about consent, but we can't talk about consent without addressing sexual violence and the gender-based violence that's resulting from gender inequality in our province. As an educator in our community, I am glad to see that "consent" is no longer a foreign word, but I look forward to seeing an increase in awareness of what exactly consent means and looks like in our everyday lives. Supporting our young people to better understand their bodies and their rights, and patterns of healthy versus unhealthy relationships, is part of that solution, part of the change in ending sexual violence.

However, it's important that we equip the educators who will disseminate this information with the information themselves. We can't just introduce topics into the curriculum and expect the message and information to be transferred adequately when the educators themselves have grown up in our society, a society that normalizes and perpetuates gender-based violence. It is for these reasons and the reasons shared by both Sara and Judah before me that the work of sexual assault centres across Ontario needs to be supported—because these people have been doing the work. Where else do you work with a degree in gender equality and social justice?

It's not always the case, as Judah stated, that getting into schools to support learning comes from the top down. More often than not, it's at the ground level, where teachers and individuals, for their own reasons, advocate for sexual assault centres to come into their classrooms. The top-down support of the expertise of sexual assault centres in our community is often reactionary. It's a call we get when a situation arises and is not resourced for the prevention work that is needed. We need to use education for prevention and allocate resources accordingly.

As an agency, we support the aboriginal-led strategies to address sexual and gender-based violence against aboriginal women. We've heard the recent stories. We know the facts. We know that aboriginal women are five times more likely to die as a result of the violence. We have a collective responsibility to recognize this and work towards the change. The continually increasing number of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada is something that needs more attention. As an agency, we engage our community in various public education events and community activities that aim to open the eyes and minds of people to learn more about and question what is being done to explore these injustices.

Our annual Sisters in Spirit vigil is an example of the types of public forums we host to encourage our community members to be a part of the change and to engage in crucial unlearning of oppressions, stereotypes and inequality.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. St. Peter, you have one minute remaining.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: The stories shared by the brave women whom I've spoken to across the country will support that sexual assault centres in our province have been doing the work for decades, which is why it is imperative that funding allocated to Ontario's sexual assault centres and other services that survivors need be adequate and sustainable.

Focusing on increasing sexual assault reporting won't necessarily increase support to victims or end gender-based violence. Our current system is rife with problems that do not make reporting necessarily useful or a supportive method for dealing with sexual violence. In reality, a majority of sexual assault cases are simply not reported at all.

Similar to the voices that go unheard, some sexual assault survivors, like our at-risk youth, our sex trade workers and our women engaged in substance use, are often revictimized over and over and scrutinized for their behaviours, their roles and their reaction, should they testify in court.

Women can and ought to feel like they have the right to report, but they also need information, support and alternatives to reporting, should they choose not to—prevention, education and training, challenging sexual violence myths, and supporting professionals, bystanders and the public at large to sensitively respond to sexual violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks for your presentation. You bring a lot of experience to this committee. I wanted to ask you, because you talk about this culture and the fact that people don't fully understand what sexual assault is, or sexual violence even—they can't define it—do you think that we're losing ground as a society? I have a daughter; she's 14 years old. She's exposed to things that I never, ever wanted her to see through the media, through social media, online. Can you comment on that?

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: We're losing ground if we don't keep the education on par with the experiences. There's no point in educating people for a world that we lived in 14 years ago, when that's changing so rapidly.

Ms. Catherine Fife: So your message around using education for prevention is very powerful, but it has to be current and it has to be relevant.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: And it has to be—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Accessible.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: —coming from the right source. That's my fear.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Thanks for your presentation. I thank you for your support to the curriculum change. I, too, recognize that it's very important to educate the general public in terms of prevention, and I recognize that your group provides quite a bit of service in the area.

I want to ask you if you can tell us what specific initiatives you think may improve the service delivery in your area; for example, if there is any service or organization that could be integrated into the shelter program that you have to provide a better service or experience to the client.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: I think having the resources to expand what's already being done in terms of court accompaniments, support around hospital accompaniments. That comes down to time and people being able to do those things. They already exist within our shelter—but just making sure that we have the resources to continue to provide those programs.

Mr. Han Dong: So expand the funding in the program?

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: Yes.

Mr. Han Dong: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you, Jessica, for coming in and presenting to the committee this morning. You talked about allocating resources wisely. At the beginning of your remarks, you talked about some of the changes in the actual education and perhaps some roll-backs. I don't know if you want to expand on that and talk about exactly where you feel dollars should be.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: It's about not reinventing the wheel, so not creating initiatives that disregard the work that is already being done, and looking at that top-down in terms of bringing people in to support educators who might not have that analysis and gender lens to do the work that needs to be done in order to disseminate this curriculum—so looking at how we increase partnerships with sexual assault centres and academic institutions to advance the programming.

Mr. Michael Harris: Have you been part of the system currently?

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: Yes, but it's usually, like I was saying, at an individual level, where a teacher, from their own experience, advocates for us to come in. It's not until it's responsive or a youth or student has been violated that all of a sudden boards and higher-ups want a presence within their school.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We are very grateful for your presentation this morning. We invite you now to join the audience, if you wish to.

BRANT RESPONSE AGAINST VIOLENCE EVERYWHERE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter from Brant Response Against Violence Everywhere. Please come forward and make yourselves

comfortable. If you'd like to pour yourselves a glass of water, please do so. You are going to have 15 minutes to address our committee and then they will put some questions before you. Please begin by stating your names and your organization's name.

1130

Ms. Sandi Montour: *Remarks in Mohawk.* My name is Sandi Montour. I'm from Six Nations of the Grand River. My name is Ganhodoghus, which means I'm an opener. I am Mohawk Turtle Clan.

Ms. Joanna Brant: Good morning. My name is Joanna Brant, and I work at the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant. I want to acknowledge first that we're on native territory today and also to say that I feel as though I'm stepping on to sacred ground. I'm very moved by the presence of my sisters in the struggle—Jess, Bernice, Sara and Carrie—this morning, and also by the fact that our provincial government has prioritized bringing us together and having open hearts and minds in this process moving forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Well, we're very honoured by your presence today.

Ms. Joanna Brant: Thank you. Today, we are representing Brant Response Against Violence Everywhere, which is a long-standing DV committee in our community. We have 13 partner agencies, including a sexual assault care and treatment centre. We're being supported by Mary Dempsey from that organization today.

The objectives connect to advocacy for improvements in existing systems, prevention and intervention initiatives, coordination and improvement of the flow of information between agencies to ensure a sound knowledge base for the application of DV protocols, the promotion of education and training amongst agencies, and increased accountability in the delivery of each member agency's respective service.

We formed a subcommittee, the sexual violence action group, and we are charged with the responsibility of responding to any and all matters related to sexual violence in Brantford, Brant county.

We wholeheartedly support the conclusions and recommendations provided in the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres' brief to the select committee, and we are very pleased to hear so many of the themes that we identify with so strongly echoed by our colleagues today. We provide this additional brief to highlight the specific needs of our community, including Brantford, Brant county, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

Our main conclusion is that increased support is needed for sexual violence work that includes prevention, healing and change. This is in contrast to an approach that emphasizes punishment through the criminal justice system.

I'm not going to lead through the detailed version of the report because it's quite lengthy, and we wanted to give you as many resources as we can to take away with you. We're also mindful of the fact that we're the last speakers before lunch, so blood sugar might be bottoming out a little bit.

But I did just want to highlight one area, which is the author's position in regard to the submission connected to healing and change. We believe that there is no change without healing and no healing without change where sexual violence is concerned. Healing at the individual level and change at the community level must occur in tandem. Psychiatric, psychological, social work, mental health and justice system interventions which seek to facilitate healing for individual women who have survived sexual violence will fail if the woman must return to an unchanged community where sexual violence continues to be perpetrated. Correspondingly, change cannot take place without healing for women who have been impacted by sexual violence; that is to say, every woman.

For indigenous communities, sexual violence and other forms of violence such as family violence are linked to the trauma experienced through colonization and, more specifically, the experiences of residential schools. Thus, it is vital to recognize that to address the issue of sexual violence against aboriginal women, we must also be prepared to undertake healing and change with respect to interrelated issues such as racism, grief, addictions, poverty and so forth.

We refuse to surrender female survivors of rape and other forms of gendered violence and trauma to the exact environment that allowed those atrocities to occur in the first place, and we believe our provincial government should refuse to do that too.

Ms. Sandi Montour: Our most urgent recommendation is to increase support for sexual violence healing work with aboriginal women. This includes developing a better understanding of the impact of sexual violence in indigenous communities. To do so, we recommend providing provincial funding to support the First Nations Women's Caucus. The First Nations Women's Caucus has been sanctioned by the Chiefs of Ontario to organize a gathering of survivors of sexual violence to share their stories and to promote healing and understanding.

If you want to hear the aboriginal voice, you need to give money and support to aboriginal organizations to foster that voice because when you have white privilege—it is very intimidating for our women to stand up here and talk to individuals who have white privilege. The First Nations Women's Caucus has already done an initiative for the murdered and missing aboriginal women in Ontario, and I know that they would do an excellent job to promote that voice.

We would also support providing long-term, stable provincial government funding to establish violence-against-women agencies on the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, specifically for sexual violence support work. Currently, on-reserve sexual violence support work in our area receives no funding, despite being the highest at-risk population and despite being the largest First Nation in all of Canada. That's something that I fight very strongly for as a director of our shelter, and I will continue to fight for that.

Also, include at least one representative on Ontario's Roundtable on Violence Against Women who has direct

experience and knowledge of issues facing survivors and sexual violence support providers on First Nation territories. If possible, we would strongly encourage the inclusion of two representatives, one from the northern reserves in northern Ontario and one from a reserve in southern Ontario. I'm aware that you currently have a representative from the OFIFC on the round table; however, they represent the urban aboriginals, and we each have our own experience. Certainly the southern reserves as well as the northern reserves have two different experiences as well.

We are also recommending organizing an initiative led by aboriginal women to integrate a more thorough explanation of the relationship between sexual violence against aboriginal women and the impact of residential schools and colonization into Ontario's It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment.

Also, provide additional resources to help operationalize provincial legislation that is beneficial to aboriginal women on First Nations territories, such as Bill 168. Bill 168 is something that I know is sanctioned throughout most of the province; however, because First Nations territories are federally funded, there are options. Most organizations on-reserve do not have to sanction Bill 168, so it's actually, again, a privilege to have Bill 168 in your organization. Please don't make that assumption that every territory has a Bill 168 policy, because most in the Six Nations of the Grand River do not have that policy.

While implementation of such legislation is not required on-reserve, organizations and businesses might be keen to do so if they knew more about the best practices contained in such legislation and had the resources to put these legislative changes into effect.

Ms. Joanna Brant: We also support funding for prevention, healing and change work at the community level. To do so, we recommend the following:

Provide new funding and resources that will strengthen already existing services in Brantford, Brant county and Six Nations of the Grand River. We note that this reinforces the recommendations outlined in (1)(b) to provide funding to established agencies on Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

Also, fund inter-agency collaboration work that emphasizes eliminating sexual violence and harassment, including opportunities for community organizations to work with institutions—such as harassment. We are a MAG-funded agency at the sexual assault centre, but we notice that a lot of our collaborative work is in fact invisible and there is no way to report on those meetings and the meaning that we make in the community because of that work.

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Work directly with established violence-against-women agencies to develop accessible campaign materials to address key issues such as consent, victim blaming, online safety and negative stereotypes of aboriginal women etc. Ideally, these materials would be available province-wide, free of charge, and be adaptable to the whole community, with specific reference to our indigenous sisters in that regard.

That concludes the formal portion of our presentation, as we were hoping that panel members would ask us questions that related to specific recommendations so we could direct our comments towards the areas of most interest to you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sure our members are going to have lots of good questions for you. We begin with MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you. Meegwetich. Powerful presentation, helpful recommendations, and that's what we're looking for.

I'm not far from you, in Burlington, actually.

A question for you: I was interested to learn more about Bill 168 and it not being applicable. Is that because of the federal funding constructs? Could you explain that to me?

Ms. Sandi Montour: It's because the reserves are on federal territory. We're sovereign territory, so any legislation that comes down from the province, it's more optional. There are certain things that are optional. That is one bill—and, again, most reserves are run by chief and council, as you're probably aware. Well, chief and council are mainly male, as well.

Again, Six Nations is one of the most progressive reserves in all of Canada, and if we don't have it, I guarantee you, they don't have it. That's something that Ganohkwásrâ, the organization that I'm from—we have that, but we have it more as a best practice. We try to model that to other organizations in our community. However, most of them have not even heard of Bill 168.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Okay. Quickly, as we move forward, since the action plan includes possible legislative remedies around the Occupational Health and Safety Act—amendments to Bill 168—how can we best proceed in that regard, ensuring that we work in partnership with you?

Ms. Sandi Montour: Well, what we talked about here is doing best practices. Again, I don't think it would be right to come down and say, "Thou must," because, especially for aboriginal people, we will push back. It's all in here about advocating for doing best practices, promoting best practices.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Sharing them.

Ms. Sandi Montour: Sharing them, yes.

Ms. Joanna Brant: I think we also need to understand that there's a differential impact on the aboriginal community in regard to some of these issues. If you're designing something that's supposed to be for the whole province and it doesn't take the experience of on-reserve communities into account, I think it behooves us to figure out how to add companion resources, companion documents, companion supports, so that those core resources that are promising practices can be accessed.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you both for coming and making your presentations this morning.

I'm not sure if you were here earlier when we heard from a local organization, the Sexual Assault Support

Centre of Waterloo Region. They've got a program, Male Allies Against Sexual Violence. I'm just wondering if there's any work that you are doing in your community specifically with males and young males or boys similar to what this program offers here in the region.

Ms. Sandi Montour: Ganohkwásrâ does a lot of work with—it's our philosophy. Again, we have that holistic philosophy. It's in our traditional teachings that each of us is exposed, just by breathing, to that duality of both positive and negative energy, and it's up to us which way we choose, which path we choose.

With that in mind, we work with the whole family: the men, the women and the children, not just the women. So our policy is that violence is not okay, regardless of gender, age, position.

Yes, we have a very good men's program that does very good work. We do trauma work. We do co-ed work. We have men also in our shelters. We're very unique to the world in Canada and the United States. We're doing some really incredible things there. There was once a day when the feminists were slapping our hands because of that, and today a lot of people are coming to us, asking us how we do what we do.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. And our final—

Ms. Joanna Brant: If I may answer that question as well, just in two ways, if possible: one is to talk about the work that we are doing in our local community as it relates to concepts of masculinity and the deleterious effect that that has on our young boys and men in our No More campaign and the services that are available—but I feel this sort of empathy moment with Kathleen Wynne and the questions that she's been asked about why It's Never Okay has a gendered analysis and why the scenarios in the public service announcement focused predominantly upon the experiences of women. I'm partly looking forward to being in a forum of this kind when we don't have to address that question. I think it's exciting to see male allies taking up the reins and beginning to build on their own thinking and their work. That's definitely a project that we would want to get behind, but I also welcome the day when we can just engage in our work in an unapologetic way.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for the very specific recommendations. This is actually a bit of a gap in terms of the presentations that have been made to this committee. This is incredibly helpful, so thank you.

You mentioned at the outset—and we've heard this throughout the process of the committee—the need to provide alternatives to reporting for women who are survivors of sexual violence. I would imagine that for First Nations women, given the experiences of colonialism and residential schools, the alternatives to reporting may look different. I'd be interested in hearing your perspective about helpful approaches within the community to help First Nations women heal and to provide alternatives to reporting.

Ms. Sandi Montour: I think a lot of the people—not all; I can't speak for all, of course—who we've worked with just want healing. They don't want the punishment; they want healing. Because of that there are various communities that do justice circles. There are various initiatives such as that throughout Canada.

Again, a large portion of the individuals who are molesting are family members—because in fact, a lot of us are family and we know each other. Again, I'm sure you have heard the dynamics of what happens in a community and how the perpetrator lives across the road or lives next door. Because we're on-reserve, we don't want to just leave. Leaving is not an option for us because we're tied to that land. That land watched us be born and we're tied to the land. Yes, giving women options to justice and what that might look like, I think, is a good thing. From what I know, most women want healing rather than seeing somebody—like I said, I can't speak for everybody, but that's pretty much what we hear a lot: They just want their family member to heal.

Ms. Joanna Brant: I didn't prepare exact stats, although I might have anticipated that question. I think an important component is also who justice gets visited upon. I think there's a differential impact in the aboriginal community in terms of criminalization and incarceration of men. We want to be very clear, when we're moving forward with justice recommendations, that if the model remains unchanged, that inequity will be enhanced and perpetuated rather than eliminated.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, thank you very much for coming and speaking to us today and providing your information. Much gratitude to you. Thank you again.

Committee members, thank you for your work this morning. We are adjourned until 1 p.m.

The committee recessed from 1150 to 1302.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. We continue today with our afternoon session in Kitchener-Waterloo. I'd like to welcome all of the presenters who are here this afternoon and any guests.

Let me very quickly share with you the mandate of this committee. We're here to listen to the experiences of survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. However, I do want to stress that this committee does not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

I welcome you.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I see that we have our first presenters here from Wilfrid Laurier University. Could you please start by saying your names and any titles that go with the names?

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. We're very pleased to be here. I'm David McMurray, and I'm the vice-president of student affairs at Wilfrid Laurier.

Ms. Lynn Kane: My name is Lynn Kane. I work in Laurier's Diversity and Equity Office as the acting manager.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Mr. David McMurray: Okay. Thanks very much. I've had the pleasure of presenting twice to the committee, first of all representing Wilfrid Laurier University, and then in the second session as chair of the Council of Ontario Universities Reference Group on Sexual Violence.

I just wanted to start with an introduction, because Lynn will be doing the bulk of our presentation for Laurier today. While I've been designated as the institutional lead on matters associated with gendered violence at Laurier, we certainly are taking a team approach. We have approximately 200 staff, faculty and student volunteers involved in our efforts, which we'll explain today.

We launched the Diversity and Equity Office at Laurier for this purpose in 2006, so we've been working on education and programming, policy research and assessment for some time. While we'll focus somewhat on history, we really want to expand on recent research and programming commitments at Laurier. Our approach, as I say, is not solely on sexual violence and harassment but on gendered violence overall.

Lynn, take it away.

Ms. Lynn Kane: Thank you. Like many good undergraduate papers do, I'm going to start with a definition. I think that's really important to our Laurier approach, and I think it's something that sets us apart. We're using the term "gendered violence" instead of sexual assault or sexual violence because we see this as a cultural problem. We're looking at all of the factors related to that. That includes, for us, homophobia, intersections with racism, harassment, and stalking. We use this term to be a large umbrella so that it's very inclusive of all of the different aspects, and this was a recommendation to us from The Change Project, to use the term "gendered violence." That has informed our approach to defining our terms for the Gendered Violence Task Force.

After speaking about the definition, I'm going to go a little bit into the history of the culture at Laurier and I think something very common to university culture in general. This article is from The Cord in 1989. They outline panty raids that were happening in our residence buildings. Groups of men were breaking into women's rooms at night, stealing their underpants and displaying them in the dining hall. In The Cord, the conversation isn't condemning it or applauding it; it's really a back-and-forth dialogue. It's students engaging in the conversation about whether or not this is about spirit-building or whether or not this is about misogyny, and they are divided on the issue.

In 1990, after these things were happening, the president of the university at the time brought together a committee of six people on this issue and they heard 28

recommendations related to some very similar things that you're going to hear today: orientation programming, dons training, and a position dedicated to human rights and employment equity in order to address this. I bring this up because this is really fresh and on universities' minds right now, but it is not a new issue. Students, especially, have been engaging in these dialogues and having these conversations for a very long time.

Some of the more recent calls to action at our institution: One of them of note is an open letter that was written last December by two students in the Women and Gender Studies program. In that class of 50 students, five disclosed experiences of sexual assault to all of their classmates and recounted that the responses that they received from their peers were not adequate. Impassioned students wrote a letter—it was published in The Cord and it was signed by their classmates—about inadequate responses. After that time, we convened the Gendered Violence Task Force, which I'll speak more about later.

Some ongoing grassroots work and student activism include Not My Laurier. That's a campaign that was started by a Laurier athletics student and partnered with the Laurier athletics department and the Diversity and Equity Office to say that gendered violence doesn't represent her Laurier. She has engaged a ton of volunteers and made this an ongoing program. Monthly, there are different initiatives tied to different themes related to sexual assault/gendered violence, such as consent, healthy relationships or masculinity.

We have the Women's Safety Action Group in Brantford and we have ASCC, also out of Brantford. This is a group of former journalism students who call themselves the Advocates for a Student Culture of Consent. It's a really clever acronym, I think. Then, of course, there are the calls to action, such as the media coverage, the Toronto Star article, and the Premier's action plan, It's Never Okay.

We're really lucky at Laurier to have a little bit of a head start with this in that we just wrapped up a multi-year research project in partnership with the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region and with SIRG, which stands for the Social Innovation Research Group, out of our faculty of social work. It was funded by Status of Women Canada.

The Change Project gave us very Laurier-specific research. Much of the findings in this report are in line with what you find through research on a much broader scale: 18% of our students had experienced gender discrimination—self-reports of it—and 13% had experienced sexual assault. When you flipped it and you asked students, "How many students have disclosed to you gender discrimination and sexual assault?", it was about double. So about 25% of our students had had a disclosure from a peer that they had been sexually assaulted.

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Consistent with what we see elsewhere, women were 1.58 times more likely to experience gendered violence. Students with disabilities were over three times more likely to experience gendered violence.

Out of this report, they were able to make recommendations to the institution. There were four headings of recommendations and 11 distinct actions under prevention, student-centred responses, committed and accountable leadership, and improved collaboration between the university and the community. We're really pleased that this report has really guided us. We've begun a lot of the recommendations that they've put out; for example, bystander intervention training and engaging men in conversations about masculinity.

One of the things that we find really helpful about the report—I know you heard from some of our students this morning—was how much student input was in it; there was a lot of qualitative data, a lot of student voices and a lot of credit, where it was due, to students for all of the grassroots work that they've been doing in this area for many, many years.

Mr. David McMurray: The level of engagement is widespread, starting with a representation across Ontario with all Ontario universities, and I'll be speaking to that a little bit later today. I'm currently serving as chair of that group. The Gendered Violence Task Force at Laurier that Lynn mentioned rose out of the response and the input primarily from students, but it has become a campus-wide community effort of students, staff and faculty.

In order to develop action-oriented and time-sensitive work, we developed terms of reference and an action plan based on policy, education, awareness, prevention, support and services, research and assessment, and communicating all of our activities and actions campus-wide. The basis of those terms was drawn from research that our students are involved with that Lynn is going to explain, as well as the Women's Directorate guide and Premier's action plan.

Something unique to Laurier: We've just appointed a gendered violence faculty colleague to provide theoretical, technical and professional expertise associated with the literature so that regardless of the representation, the ideas that come forward will be well-grounded in the field with that kind of specific leadership.

Ms. Lynn Kane: I'm going to talk more about the task force action plan and terms of reference. When we got started last year, after the response to the open letter, there were about 10 of us. As David said, we're nearing on 200 people involved. We put out a call again in September. I think I was prepared to hear back from about 30 or 40 people, in terms of booking room space and coordinating the first meeting, and then I was bombarded and overwhelmed, and really impressed with the natural diversity that came to that group in terms of representation from staff, faculty and students—male students, female students, students on our Brantford campus and students in Waterloo. That was very impressive.

Our mission is to work toward the elimination of gendered violence at Laurier, but it's also to work toward better support and robust support for survivors. Inclusive dialogue, meaningful and ongoing training, accessible policies and protocols, community engagement, support services and campus collaborations are all part of our mission.

We feel really strongly about our guiding values and principles—I only have rough headings up on the slide. These principles came out of the first general meeting of all of those members. We had members write down on a cue card what they wanted this task force to achieve. A lot of those statements were very much value- and vision-driven rather than action-driven. They outlined that safety is not just physical, so our task force mandate is not just to deal with feelings of physical safety—things like lighting—but emotional safety and well-being. They talked about shared responsibility and the idea that this is not only an issue for a particular department, such as the Diversity and Equity Office, or for special constables or wellness, but this is really something that everyone on campus can play a role in.

In the idea of shared responsibility, though, we do emphasize in our terms of reference that this doesn't impact everyone equally, and so special attention needs to be given to the voices of people who are impacted more greatly.

Intentionality, integration and sustainability is another one of the principles. That principle sees and recognizes this as a cultural problem, a problem of rape culture and misogyny, and is working to embed training efforts not just at those key touch-point times which are really important, such as orientation week, but into all of our services and existing programs. When faculty are being on-boarded, for example, or in the classroom, what are the books that we're looking at? What's the curriculum?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Lynn, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Lynn Kane: Thank you.

Mr. David McMurray: Let's go to "Next steps."

Ms. Lynn Kane: Yes. Some of the actions that the task force is looking at—one that we're really excited about is the development of a policy. I'll probably use my last minute to talk about this because it's a distinct policy. This policy was drafted for us by that committee I mentioned, ASCC. These students were in a class. The class ended, and they continued to stay together and they made us a policy. They said that by September or October of next year it will be ready to present to the board of governors and the senate. We have taken them very seriously. They are now part of the policy and protocol working group and they have submitted a draft to us that we're now looking at revising, parsing out and making more accessible and clear. They are still involved in that committee. We're really proud that this is completely student-run. I think that we're really lucky that that's the case.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Committee members, we're going to share the last two and a half minutes if we can, perhaps, if you want to make a very concise comment. We begin with our PC caucus, with MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, carry on. If you've got something you want to get out before you're done, please take the time.

Ms. Lynn Kane: You can ask questions more specifically about the policy if you're interested. Our long-term

steps focus on education and training and not one-offs. Ongoing programming is really important to us. I think I covered most of how we're going to proceed with actions through the values.

The one thing I will mention about the policy is that it is going to be inclusive of staff, faculty and students. Its focus will be on gendered violence, much like the definition I set out before, so it is looking at not just sexual assault or harassment. It's going to be broader than that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): A comment from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for the presentation, to you both. I like the fact that you've defined it, because the theme throughout the morning is that people don't have a full understanding of what sexual harassment is, either as the offender or those who are being offended or imposed upon.

What's happening at Laurier is absolutely unique. In the context of the work of this committee, can you tell us specifically what you need for us to recommend going forward so that you can continue the work and possibly duplicate it in other campuses across the province?

Mr. David McMurray: I think one of the most important things is the balance that we need to achieve between compliance and reporting, and the compassion required of survivors. It's a bit of a conundrum that I'm finding that exists, not only on our campus but provincially, that there's no sure, pure reporting mechanism that we're aware of that really represents the kind of campus climate that we know exists that comes from our students and also is provided in the data from research on vehicles such as the national college health survey. That would be helpful to reach out to universities to achieve an understanding of how important it is to balance compliance and compassion when reporting and supporting survivors.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We're going to get a final comment in from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: The working group for the policy run by the students: Is this in response to, or will it cover off, the proposed requirements for universities to have sexual assault policies?

Mr. David McMurray: Absolutely.

Ms. Lynn Kane: Yes.

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Mr. David McMurray: And we want to ground that in a firm foundation that has come from our students.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming forward and sharing your information with this committee today. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience.

Mr. David McMurray: That's me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh, sorry. Just stay right there, David.

Mr. David McMurray: I'm just going to stay right here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just change hats.

Mr. David McMurray: You can stay.

Ms. Lynn Kane: I'll just sit and watch.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you for having the patience to listen to me twice.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I thought it might be a different David McMurray. Who knew?

Mr. David McMurray: No, my evil twin brother—it's me.

Not only assuming the responsibility, which I cherish, at Laurier, I was also elected to chair the Council of Ontario Universities' new reference group on sexual violence that was established by the presidents of all Ontario universities. I have a prepared speech that I'd like to present, and then, obviously, take any questions that may arise.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and share the important work that is happening across universities in Ontario.

The reference group that I chair was established to provide evidence-based advice to Ontario's 21 universities as the entire sector looks to build on the work to create campuses that are free of sexual violence and to support survivors. Universities applaud the Premier for the bold approach she's taking to sexual violence in the action plan, and we very much appreciate and support the work done by all parties on the issue, especially those who have come together through the select committee. The universities in Ontario all recognize how widespread sexual violence is throughout society, and we want to do all that we can to address the issues on our campuses.

Last fall, after a series of media reports on sexual violence on campus in which some female survivors said that they felt that there was not a clear path to get help, Ontario universities came together to discuss what more we could do to make our resources easier to access, clear and concise, and to create safer campuses.

To help survivors navigate the resources available to them, every university in the province committed to developing a sexual assault policy and protocol website. They also agreed to put out a clear statement from the president that sexual violence would not be tolerated, and laid out steps that survivors could take to get help. These websites are now up and in place at all universities.

The COU also conducted an inventory of what was already in place on campuses and found that all universities had policies and procedures, as well as prevention, support and education programs, and at this point all universities have committed, regardless of the policy framework that they have, to distinctive sexual violence policies.

In February, more than 200 faculty, staff and students came together from every university in Ontario at a conference called Taking Action, hosted by the Ontario

COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES,
REFERENCE GROUP ON SEXUAL
VIOLENCE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter, David McMurray, with the—

Committee on Student Affairs, which is my professional group, associated primarily with vice-presidents and vice-provosts. We heard from speakers, shared ideas, and took part in round-table discussions on prevention and awareness strategies, support services and policy development.

What I learned from the conference was that while universities might not all take the same approach, we have a vast number of people devoting their time and energy to finding progressive, compassionate ways to deal with this very serious problem. From the moment students arrive on campus, often right out of high school, and also throughout their time with us, there are education campaigns that aim to challenge and change perceptions.

The University of Guelph, for example, has mandatory training for students about the meaning of “consent” during orientations. More and more universities, including Laurier, have bystander intervention training. We currently have close to 100 staff, faculty and students trained as “train the trainer” in the bystander intervention program. Others use social media or seek out student pubs to raise awareness about sexual violence and educate students about prevention.

When we talked at our conference about supports, we heard that some universities have a 24-hour crisis line, in some cases operated by students, many in partnership with their community resources. Many have “report” buttons on their website. Many have safe-walk programs and foot patrols, and some have safety applications for smart phones.

While universities in Ontario offer many of the same supports, there are instances where they provide different offerings based on the specific needs of each campus and community. This differs depending on location and size, sometimes. While specific programs may differ on our campuses, it’s important to know that when it comes to tackling sexual violence, Ontario universities have a number of important elements in common. These are some of those elements:

All universities engage in various forms of awareness-building about sexual violence: participating in campaigns, organizing workshops, hosting speakers, delivering training, and promoting events at orientation and throughout the year. It’s important to educate students when they first arrive; a lot of decisions are made. But it’s also important not to overload students and to really focus on the transition and transformation that occurs in an educational environment from the time that they start first year to when they graduate.

We all have mechanisms for launching formal and informal complaints. We all have mechanisms for confidential disclosure.

Universities all support survivors in ways which relate directly to their own environment, whether it be in the classroom or in residence, for example.

We all offer on-campus counselling, and we partner with our community colleagues to provide additional support off-campus. That support is available 24/7.

Our universities make it easy to find this help by promoting services clearly on their websites. Despite this fact, many students tell us that they don’t know; they’re not aware. So we have to work harder at communicating these resources for students and working with them in compassionate ways.

Many universities are looking at how to enhance the existing training for a variety of people to handle disclosures and work with survivors of sexual violence. Some are taking the approach that there should be a one-stop, one-place, sexual violence response centre. Many of us are concerned about whether that should be one place or a variety of touch-points that appeal to the student depending on their particular wants, needs and hopes for student success.

Universities are using a broad lens and taking a hard look at events and programming specifically focused on sexual violence. It’s not just about the violence piece but also programming on, “What is a healthy relationship? What about the impact of alcohol and drugs and mental health and organized sports?”—more to determine how sexual assault prevention or support initiatives can be incorporated.

Universities are now preparing to meet the requirements of the Premier’s action plan. All universities are creating, as I mentioned, a stand-alone policy. They are doing this in consultation with students as well as faculty and staff, since these policies will apply entirely to our campus communities. Universities are working together to find a common system for public reporting of incidents of sexual violence. We want to be transparent and we want to give students and the public a fair comparison from university to university, all while respecting survivors’ rights to anonymity and confidentiality. This is the point I made earlier about the balance of compliance and compassion.

The past year put a spotlight on sexual assault and saw a shift in consciousness that was bigger than any one person, institution or sector. It led to fundamental shifts in the way we think and talk about the issue, not only at post-secondary institutions but across entire communities.

Ontario’s universities have taken important lessons from the recent work on this issue. Perhaps most importantly, we will continue to listen to and engage with students and community organizers to work towards communities that are free—where there’s no tolerance for sexual violence.

Thank you very much. I’d be pleased to try to answer any questions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for your participation in the earlier presentation and this one also. I want to talk a little bit more about the common reporting system. The earlier presentation started out with a clear definition of what gendered violence is. I imagine, for this common reporting system to have any value, you’re going to have

to have the same definition across institutions so that you're reporting apples to apples. Where are you at in terms of that discussion across institutions about a common definition for what's going to be reported?

Mr. David McMurray: The reference group is focusing on that specifically. As chair, I actually brought our gendered-violence definition, which emerged from the Change Project at Laurier, and tabled the question, "Is our role going to be gendered violence-focused or sexual violence-focused?" And the decision from the reference group was that it would be focused, at least at this point in time, across the sector, on sexual violence.

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There are various means of reporting in place now that range from formal reporting to informal reporting. The ones that are made public are usually at the former, the formal statistics, which we all know are low.

What we'd like to do, and what we're discussing, is how we can come together with a system that involves multiple touch-points on campus that I mentioned earlier. So we have deans of students offices, we have residence life offices, we have the wellness centres, we have the Diversity and Equity Office, we have conflict and resolution offices, we have peers. We have multiple touch-points that the students interact with, so it's a complex issue of how that kind of informal data can be communicated in a way that speaks to a safe campus, as opposed to "Here are the statistics"—full stop. We'd rather talk about, "Here's the evidence associated with a safe campus and what's most important to our students and what they're encountering." We're working towards that. There's a special committee that's been developed by the ministry of five universities, five colleges and five student representatives, who are going to be meeting June 2 to more explicitly try to come up with some type of approach that all will hopefully reach consensus on.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Great presentation. One of the things, just anecdotally, that I thought was terrific about this and had been an open question for me was the sharing of best practices amongst university campuses. While, intellectually, that might seem like a sound practice, I wasn't exactly sure if that was happening, because we're hearing across the province of different approaches, and you don't always get the sense that there's a sharing. I understand that that's happening, certainly, from your presentation, and I think that's important.

The other piece that I'm wondering about is, are you measuring the impact of these interventions and are there in place some—because I think that will help the broader understanding and to shape policy provincially, but also because it gets at a greater understanding of what's working.

Then I have just a quick recommendation for you at the end.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much. Yes, we are measuring results very, very explicitly. Our work-

ing groups include policy, education, support and services, communication, and the fifth is research and assessment. We want to evaluate absolutely everything that we're doing and provide evidence that will support decision-making and will give us feedback on whether our efforts are working.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: If I do have 30 seconds, Madam Chair, just quickly: I'll share with you her information at the end, but we heard from a professor at the University of Windsor yesterday who's doing really groundbreaking work in this area. They've designed a specific prevention program at Windsor, and she's done some very distinct research into that program with a broader lens. I'll share with you her information at the end. I think you'd find it helpful.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: My pleasure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. It's good to know someone else is keeping time, too.

Our final question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you, David, for coming in today.

We heard this morning about the Dalhousie situation, and I'm almost certain I've read of Laurier pioneering or being out front of this. I'm just wondering if you can speak to Laurier's changes, if any, since that incident. If you want to comment briefly?

Mr. David McMurray: It'd be a long story to tell. We would probably have taken a different approach. Laurier's approach in its student code of conduct is restorative-based and not really open to various interpretations. It's very clear. It's focused on the student; it's focused on the community. It's approved by the senate and our board of governors, and we've been working with it, from a student leadership perspective, for many, many years.

I think it's really important to say that the Diversity and Equity Office started as the Office for Student Diversity in 2006. It was intended to reach out and listen to students to find out what some of the most critical problems were, and after listening to listen again and come back with a focus on programming, prevention and education. I think we've taken it seriously for a long time and not simply been reactive to some of the more recent media front-page news.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very kindly for both of your presentations today.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And we invite you, if you wish now, to join our audience.

MS. MARY LOUISE HEYENS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter to come forward, Mary Heyens.

Good afternoon, Mary. Have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. If you like, pour yourself a glass of water.

Now, Mary, I hear that you might be a little bit nervous, and that's okay. Sometimes we're nervous too.

Just to make you feel a little bit more reassured, I'm going to ask our committee members to go around the horn here and just say their first name and where they're from. I'm Daiene and I'm in Kitchener.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Laurie, and I'm from the Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock area.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hello.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Michael Harris is next to me. He's Kitchener-Waterloo.

Mr. Michael Harris: Kitchener-Conestoga.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Kitchener-Conestoga. Sorry.

Mr. Michael Harris: Next is Kitchener-Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'm Catherine Fife. I'm the MPP for Kitchener-Waterloo.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Hi. I'm Peggy Sattler, and I'm from London.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hi.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi. I'm Eleanor, and I'm the MPP for Burlington.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: And I'm Kathryn. I'm the MPP for Cambridge—so close by.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hello.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm Marie-France, and I'm from Ottawa-Orléans.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hello.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Hello.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I'm Harinder. I'm from Brampton-Springdale.

Mr. Han Dong: I'm Han Dong from Trinity-Spadina, Toronto. Good afternoon, Mary.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Good afternoon.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So, Mary, you're in good hands here. We're a very friendly and supportive group.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'll let you know that you will have 15 minutes for your presentation, and then our committee members will ask you some questions, if you're okay with that. So begin any time. Start by stating your name and if you're with a group or an organization or if you're here on your own.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay. My name is Mary Louise Heyens. I reside in Guelph. I live in Guelph.

Can you hear me okay? I'm not too close—too far away?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just grab the microphone and point it more toward you. There you go.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: How's that? Okay?

This is a public presentation. Thank you for the opportunity to present this oral presentation. Please refer to the attached documents that are accompanying my presentation. They will provide the select committee with a snapshot chronology of my story. As well, I submitted a written submission May 15. Please review all my documents. Thank you.

I ask the select committee for help to decipher the contents of Premier Kathleen Wynne's action plan, what

compensation packages I can apply for and what support programs I am eligible for. I don't know if you can help me locate legal assistance, but I also wish to participate in your action plan polls and surveys. I read that on page 13 of the action plan.

Am I speaking properly?

Interjection.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): It's fine.

Interjection.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay. I thank my family and friends for their support.

I'm here to report three male-dominant workplaces in southern Ontario that discriminate against women.

The first one is the employer, city of Guelph, and union CUPE Local 241.

I speak out publicly so that other women and men will be empowered. What happened to me was wrong. I never gave up trying to get my job back and an apology from the city of Guelph and CUPE 241.

The sexual violence in my workplace caused me to develop PTSD, undermined my dignity, blocked my career path, prevented me from reaching my full potential and destroyed my ability to earn a living.

The act of making public a private trauma to this select committee is powerful and holds accountable the employer, city of Guelph, and CUPE 241. Telling my story helps me feel whole and is part of my personal recovery. I have nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to hide.

I'm a survivor of workplace sexual violence and bullying and will not remain anonymous. I am not protecting anyone who made my life a living hell and a waking nightmare. It is difficult to speak out and identify myself as a victim of sexual violence which was perpetrated by co-workers, supervisors and human resource managers when I was employed by the city of Guelph and CUPE 241. It is difficult to speak out and say the words: I attempted suicide because of that workplace misogyny and bullying.

Sexual harassment is never the victim's fault. I believe it is important to put names and faces to the issues of sexual violence and bullying for reasons of healing and for political reasons.

I have lost all my retirement finances. I included a file labelled "Financial hardship" for you to review. I'm currently on ODSP and Canada Pension Plan disability.

I was hired by the city of Guelph on November 29, 2004. I'm a single parent, a professional truck driver and a skilled tradeswoman with 10 years' experience. I was a direct hire with the city and passed my probation period. Within the first four months of employment, my co-worker George sent me a lewd email saying that he liked my nipples. It just completely caught me off-guard.

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I worked 18 months full-time driving a waste packer operator truck with a clean driving record, and I was proud to serve the residents of Guelph. My dream job quickly turned into a waking nightmare. I was bullied

and sexually harassed for three years by a number of co-workers. I was assaulted at work by Patrick Kelly, a co-worker who pestered me for sex repeatedly, and I was raped on July 3, 2007, by male co-worker Ron Wisniewski. During the rape, he boasted in my face, “My mother-in-law sits on Guelph city council and I have political pull.” He also raped another co-worker named Joy Arnold. She said to me, “I guess I should have pressed charges, but my mum and aunt work for the city, so I can’t say anything.”

Please read the two-page letter written by my social worker, Valerie Damsma, of the Guelph General Hospital sexual assault unit, dated March 26, 2014, which relates to that incident.

I met a man named Joe Centorrino who was working for four years at the city and was bullied and lost his job when he spoke up. A similar incident happened to him that happened to me. One of his co-workers, Dawn Hamilton, pestered him for sex when he was a new hire. This seemed to be a recurring theme at the city of Guelph.

Betsey Elderkin, one of my co-workers, told me about her workplace harassment. The city fired her eventually.

Please refer to the file named “Guelph Police Service correspondence,” which will fill you in on all these details.

When I spoke up to report the misogyny at my workplace, the union, CUPE 241, and my employer laughed in my face and fired me. I had to hire a lawyer in 2006 just in order to communicate with this employer and union, and I had to file my own grievances because President Brad Kelloway, Vice-President Don Goodman and area rep Mark Charboneau failed to carry out their legal union duty.

The union told me to file grievances and then they blacklisted me. I had to contact and email Paul Moist and staff at their head office in Ottawa, the CUPE national headquarters, and they just blew me off and said, “We believe the local union will take care of you.”

I included letters from my lawyer, Izaak de Rijcke. He was an excellent lawyer and he helped me out as best he could. He referred me to a lawyer named Peter McSherry in Guelph, who just didn’t help me out very much.

When I reported the workplace rape, I was interviewed by two city of Guelph male police officers. There was no female officer present.

Overall, the union just stonewalled me and never represented me or supported my grievances. It was extremely difficult to find a lawyer because I didn’t have a lot of money because I had lost my job, so I was broke. I refused to sign off with the city of Guelph; I had no lawyer and did not understand what I was signing. I never gave up trying to be reinstated to my job and made sure I spoke up so that other men and women wouldn’t suffer the same way I did, especially new hires at the city of Guelph.

I attempted suicide twice, in 2007 and 2008, after the city fired me.

I received erroneous information. For example, a lawyer at the Guelph legal clinic told me not to bother

filing with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board because, in her words, “Don’t bother. They’d just turn you down and you won’t get it,” but then I started to meet other women who had applied and were awarded compensation.

Women in Crisis: I attended there for counselling, but I was really disappointed because I came back to them at least eight times and said, “I can’t find a lawyer. Help me,” and they just turned me away and said, “Well, it doesn’t relate to domestic violence. It’s a conflict of interest.” I found this really puzzling.

I searched in every city in southern Ontario many times for a lawyer, but once again, I didn’t have money.

I emailed every political party I could think of, including Laurel Broten, the minister responsible for women’s issues. I kept meeting women who were at the city—Kathleen, who drove a garbage truck like me. She took the WIST—women in skilled trades—program, the same as me. She experienced a lot of bad discrimination from Gord Hunt, who is a city of Guelph human resource labour specialist. Select committee, please pay close attention to the information I have submitted to you regarding Mr. Gord Hunt. This man, in my opinion, hates women and just blocks your career path. He gave out negative references about me over the telephone, which is illegal for a human resource manager to do—that’s what I’ve been told.

In 2009, the city introduced automated cart collection systems. I was excluded from this job because of workplace sexual violence and bullying. I was in line to try to be part of that work crew. I kept meeting more women when I was employed at the city. A female loader operator told me in 2006 that the men said to her, “Women can’t do this job.” Also, another employee, Barb Hock, told me that men intimidated her at the operations department.

A couple of quick examples: Roy DeAngelis—Mario is his nickname—on March 22, 2007, boasted to me, “There used to be no women on the garbage trucks. We were bad.” He laughs out loud, “We were hard on the women in the past.” He said this out loud in front of all my co-workers, so there were lots of witnesses around.

Murray McLeod, in 2007: “We are mistreated by management and that’s why we are so hard to get along with and we cause new employees so much trouble.”

I also included a list of co-workers who harassed me.

Overall, the point I’m making here is that there is a flaw in this workplace design because the lead hand’s co-workers are all within the same bargaining unit.

I carefully read the Jian Ghomeshi CBC report that came out in April 2015. It’s a really important document. It outlines how the workplace was flawed, and there were serious problems with people being believed when they spoke up to report their workplace harassment.

I recall my lead hand, Joe Borin, making jokes about how Mohawk, Algonquin and Dakota streets in Guelph were referred to as “the reservation” because it had low-income housing in that area. There was a lot of discrimination towards different people at my workplace.

The second employer is Guelph Tool and Die, where I worked before I was hired at the city. I worked there for four years full-time. In the year 2000, in November, one of my supervisors, Rick Dean, health and safety coordinator, made a comment to me: "Mary, do you know that if you did not have those two things on your chest, you could do this job and you'd be a man?" I reported it to the company owner, Mr. Ireland. I received a letter of apology but then after that the bullying just increased tenfold.

I went to the WIST—women in skilled trades—apprenticeship program. Just before I left Guelph Tool and Die to go to that program, Mr. Edwards, another manager, said to me, "I hear you're going to Conestoga College to take the apprenticeship program." I said to him, "Yes, when I finish I'll come back and go to the tool room as an apprentice and hopefully I can get signed up as an apprentice." Bill Edwards said to me, "Mary, if you come back to work in the tool room, I will make sure that you don't work in the tool room, so don't bother. I'll make sure you don't get a chance."

I passed my WIST course. I worked in Toronto automotive factories. I wanted to let the select committee know that I've never met any women working as machinist apprentices in tool room factories in southern Ontario—zero; I never met any, and I found that really upsetting.

The third employer is Miller waste systems out of Toronto. When I lost my job at the city of Guelph in 2007, I tried for a year and a half to secure employment with Miller waste. They're a garbage removal company. This company services Milton and areas close to Guelph, where I resided. I was actually overqualified for the job. I had good references, but the company wouldn't hire me and just stonewalled me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mary, I just want to step in and let you know you have one minute left.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you. When the Human Rights Tribunal asked this company how many women worked as truck drivers for Miller waste, they wouldn't answer. They said, "We'll get back to you," and they never did. This is a big company and I should have had that job. They promised to contact me for job openings, and when I contacted them, they never replied.
1350

The final point I want to make is that the Guelph Community Health Centre—I was volunteering there after I lost my job at the city of Guelph. I was on Ontario Works, living on less than \$500 a month. They knew I had some mental issues and I was trying to work with my health care workers to communicate with them. I took a bag of milk out of their volunteer fridge without authorization, so they banned me from the building. I found it upsetting that this community health centre wouldn't sit down and talk to me.

I hope that makes sense.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mary, thank you very much for sharing your experiences with us. I do want to reiterate to you, though, what our Clerks' office

has shared with you in writing, and that is that by naming names, you may be exposing yourself to litigation. You know and understand that. Correct?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Not really. I don't have a lawyer. I never did have a lawyer. I kept falling through the cracks in the systems, and when the systems were there, they chose not to help me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The challenge for us, though, is that by naming names—those individuals are not here in this setting and giving us their point of view. But the experiences that you are sharing, generally, are important for us to hear.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll take some questions now. We begin with our Liberal caucus, with MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you, Mary, for coming and sharing your experiences. I can understand how difficult it probably is for you to be here and share all the experiences that you've been through.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I just want to know: What could have made it easier for you? What kind of supports could the government have put in place that would have possibly made your experience easier after the first time you felt this way and you felt that you were vulnerable at that point? What could we have done to make it easier, or who would you have wanted to turn to?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you for the question. In 2013, the University of Guelph was taking a survey. I participated in that survey. It was called the "first response protocol" survey. In 2007, in Guelph, there was no protocol in place. In other words, to answer your question, what I needed was Women in Crisis, Guelph Police Service and Trellis Mental Health to sit down at the table with me and say, "Okay, Mary. This is your situation and this is how we're going to help you get through it." I was constantly trying to keep my head above water and just do the right thing and get my job back, take good care of myself and just go through these processes. I was all by myself. I couldn't find a lawyer. To answer your question, if I had had a lawyer to help me, I would have got this resolved years ago.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Sorry; can I follow up for one second? So what you're saying is that if there was somebody to help you set up a plan as to how you were going to move forward, that would have been something that would have—

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Okay.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: And to have the police acknowledge that this man who raped me, Ron Wisniewski—he was DUI and was taken off his job at the city of Guelph, but they held his spot until he got his ignition interlock off. So I was a placeholder for this guy who broke the law.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Mary, I just want to thank you for coming forward and telling your story. I'm sorry if you, as you have said, have fallen through the cracks, not having anyone to assist you. You've given us lots of documents, and I think that we'll just leave it at that. I know we're running out of time, but I just wanted to thank you for coming forward.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Mary. I know that it takes a lot of courage to come here. You've been here for most of the day, listening to a lot of the stories.

I think what we'll take out of your presentation is that there have to be some checks and balances along the way to make sure that victims are not revictimized and that the rights of people are ensured as they move through the process.

You're absolutely right: You should have had legal counsel with you from the very start, and this is a common theme that we find, that people don't have access to legal counsel and/or can't afford legal counsel, and often-times that legal counsel is not expert enough to navigate through this system, which is already so complex.

Thank you very much for providing the materials. We certainly wish you the best of luck going forward.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: I don't understand what you mean by checks and balances.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Checks and balances: You cited two different workplaces where the people who were supposed to be enforcing the policy were actually judge and juror at the same time. That should be in violation of the workplace health and safety act. There has to be some legislation which actually ensures that. If an employer has a policy, there has to be a third party to actually make sure that that policy is being upheld, because the employer is not going to say, "I am purposely sexually harassing you." There's a conflict of interest in workplaces and, you cited, also, in a union. That's part of the transcript going forward. Thank you.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Which workplaces are you referring to? The city of Guelph?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes, in your presentation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mary, may I just jump in? You, at the beginning, asked for some guidance and some direction; you were asking for help.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You say you're from Guelph. Do you know who your MPP is? Is it Liz Sandals?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Have you tried contacting her constituency office?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: I went to her in 2009 and I said I can't find a lawyer. She said, "I can't help. I don't get involved in legal matters." I was really, really upset.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Have you tried contacting legal aid in your community?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes, they assigned me a lawyer. They approved the legal aid certificate 24 hours before I went to the Human Rights Tribunal in 2009. The lawyer, Augusta Tribe, barely looked at the documents, and then she cut a deal with the lawyer in the next room. I wanted to go to a hearing. I had all the papers filed by myself. She didn't help me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I know that this is going to be a lengthier conversation and I don't want to hold up the other people who are here to give presentations. If you are patient and want to wait, perhaps we can chat after we're done today. What would you think of that?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you. I would appreciate that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming in and chatting with us.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay. Is Catherine Fife saying she's going to take out—what was she trying to say? She's going to take something out?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'll talk with her.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): She will talk with you; she's right back there.

Mary, thank you very much for coming in and talking to our committee and sharing with us today.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE LONDON, OPENING THE CIRCLE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenters, the Sexual Assault Centre London, Opening the Circle.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Thank you. I'm here alone.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon. You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee, and after that it will be followed by some questions by our committee members.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Great.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Once you are all connected there, please start by stating your name and the name of your organization, and begin any time.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Thank you very much for the opportunity of being here today. My name is Margaret MacPherson. I think about myself more as a freelance public servant than I do a consultant, but I work on a lot of different projects. I'm here to talk specifically about a project with the Sexual Assault Centre London called Opening the Circle.

For me, this journey really began with my tenure in the Ontario public service. I worked as a low-level civil servant in a regional office in the victim services secretariat, and then in children and youth services. I loved the public service and feel that we're so lucky to have the infrastructure and the people.

One of the most challenging things that I left the OPS with was, from a sort of regional vantage point, I saw

projects and initiatives that were amazing in terms of groundbreaking and grassroots that took place all over the province, but there was no way to drive it up through government so that people could see what was happening on the ground. That's kind of my personal project out in the community: figuring out ways to drive the really brilliant things that are going on up, because we have a wealth of resources in this province and people working on such amazing things with very little money. They do amazing things. That's sort of the context.

I'm here to show you one particular project that's relevant to this committee, I think. It's called Opening the Circle. It's funded by the Department of Justice. It's a two-year project. We're just coming to the end of the first leg of it, really. I wanted to show you the website because I think it speaks to the issues very well.

1400

The other thing I should say is that I am also a woman who experienced sexual violence as a young girl and never told anyone about it. It's only through working with the people that I've come in contact with at Opening the Circle that I realized it's really important to tear down the walls between those of us who would stand outside and say, "Not me," to recognizing that it's so present in our population and so many of us have been touched by it. I was a 14-year-old worker who had two managers sexually assault me in my very first job. I never told anyone, because I blamed myself somehow or I thought it was just what it was like to be a girl.

I think part of the whole package is tearing down the walls. If you want people to come forward, we have to figure out ways to create the environments where they're not anomalies, where they're not specimens, people who are different. We were doing focus groups in London with survivor groups, both men and women. Over and over again, what we heard was people who had been victimized, and revictimized, by the system, both in the service sector and also the criminal justice sector, by lawyers, by well-meaning people who treated them as different from themselves, as lesser than, somehow, for being victims. So this is the stigma, really, that we're challenging. What they wanted—over and over again what we heard—was to be treated like a whole person and not to be treated like a diagnosis, because so many of these folks have been through the system for mental health issues and addictions issues and in trouble with the law. They're struggling all over the place.

We created this project where we invited people—anyone—to come. Survivor language, victim language, is also difficult, so we talked about anyone who has been impacted by sexual violence, whether directly or indirectly. So over the last two years, we had a specific mandate to create tools. So three tools—we were developing something around peer support, because we feel peer support is primary to people getting help in and out of the system; something we called the lifespan tool, which I'll show you; and a service coordination and learning network, because what we wanted to do was figure out how to help the service system be more re-

sponsive—not just the service system, but also the community: How can we be more responsive when we're working with people who are seeking help?

This is the website. The most amazing thing about it is that when we first launched it, we took stock photography images of people, and the people on this project who came to it created this; this is their work. If you want to see energy for change, go into the communities and talk to the people who have been most impacted, because I can tell you that they have lots of energy and lots of ideas. They just want an opportunity to create something. What they'll also tell you is that having an opportunity to create something is a very healing process. There's a whole community that has been created from this work. We have over 70 people who have just come together. They come and go, as they can, because the work can be quite difficult. So sometimes people will come in for a little while and then they need to be out for a while. But other people pick it up and they work on it.

This is where we are right now. These are actual people who have been involved in the website. They wanted their faces on the website. When we're finished, you'll be able to click on them and they will have things to say to other people who are looking for help and support and community about what helped them. You're just seeing a sample of it. We just did this because we had stock photography up, and they said, "No, we want our faces on it." You can see as you scroll across it that there are pictures of people sitting in London talking together about how they're going to create tools for the people who are still out there, who have never found a voice or never found a place to come.

The project itself has three areas of focus; when you go down, you can see. This is the peer support. They have developed guidelines for peer support that I don't think exist anywhere else—I've been looking. It's about how to excel in peer support from the perspective of having experienced sexual violence. We went to the Mental Health Commission of Canada's peer support conference last year and were told that they had purposely left out sexual violence as something they wanted to deal with because it's too difficult. So we have developed guidelines through two years of consultations that will support people in providing a framework for what the rules are around peer support and how you do peer support in a way that never does harm but that actually supports yourself as a peer support, and also the person—what you can expect. It sets out some parameters. It will be available on the website; it's not there yet.

This is the lifespan tool. I'm going to give you a look at it. It's the idea about taking a look at where you are today and where you want to go. Most of the people who have participated in this project have never been involved with the service system. They have never sought services because they had some bad experiences, and so they are sort of the outliers. This is the group who say, "Not for me. I don't want to be treated like a victim." The lifespan tool is based on the determinants of health and also the

medicine wheel, because we wanted to help people consider a whole life.

When you come into the site, you launch the lifespan tool, and the first thing is a question: "Are you in crisis?" It will send you to where to get help if you're in trouble. If you're not in trouble, you go through a series of questions that will ask you about different parts of your life. Again, we looked at the determinants of health. I'm going to move through it pretty quickly, but I'll show you a few scores.

Here's one question: "Sexual violence or abuse defines my life." "Yes, I feel this way quite a lot." You go to the next question and you slide on the scale: "I feel disconnected and alone." "Yes, I feel this way today." "I am working on healing my past." "Yes, I am." "I'm able to get enjoyment out of activities." "Yes, okay, sometimes." I'm just going to cycle through the questions. "I have people who support me." "I feel anxious most of the time." "I have a safe place to live." "My head is always busy, and my thoughts are obsessive." "I have an addiction that worries me." Yes, let's say that's a big one. "I feel supported by a community (faith, spiritual, religious, arts, sports)—whatever; 'I just feel like I belong to a community.'" "I feel hopeless, depressed or desperate about my life." "I have an income that supports me." "I feel that my life is meaningful." "I'm physically healthy." "I'm angry and afraid that I will hurt someone." Let's say you feel this way a little bit. "I can change my negative self-talk." "Yes, I think I can do that." "I feel like I have nothing to give." "Yes, I feel a little bit like that." "I feel loved." "Yes, a little bit." "I have enough food."

You're just sort of assessing, and then you come to the end. What it does is, it counts up your scores, basically, and privileges what you feel good about and what you are concerned about. If you're really concerned about something, what are your options? What are the things that you could do to change your life? We've got three areas. There are strategies that come from the life experiences of the people who've been coming to the project, there are supports that are informal supports, and then there are services.

We've got one example posted for someone who says, "My thoughts are obsessive." The strategies are stories from people who say, "Here's what I do when I can't get my head to stop." On a few of them, there's an audio portion where people can listen to the story.

This is one example: "Many nights I would wake up and my brain would be running flat out and in circles. I was exhausted. On those nights, I turn on the television with a timer and the volume way down low. Listening helps me stop the monkey chatter in my brain and pretty soon I am asleep."

Those are strategies that are linked to every one of the statements that come from the people who have been involved, supports or ideas, things that have helped people along the way—joining a group, doing journaling. There have been some really interesting things, like Songza, a free Internet radio station that has many

different playlists. Turn on whichever station melds with your mood. There's a phone app available. It's just little things to help people get over whatever place they're in.

1410

Then, of course, there's the different services. This is the part that isn't really built yet, because we'll engage with the service sector to begin a discussion about what would actually be helpful for people, what's the kind of information.

So the lifespan tool—people can archive their experiences so that they can see if they've had changes over time. They can take their lifespan tool to a service provider if they want to talk about what's important to them rather than just whatever the issue is. It's a tool to help them think about the whole of their lives and make decisions.

We've had service providers who've been involved with the project from the beginning, and what they say is that this could be a radical shift. You want to talk about changing social norms. This is a power shifter in terms of putting the power back in the hands of the people to decide what is important to them.

The next step of the project is, we want to pilot with service organizations in the area because some people need help in completing the lifespan tool. So we will figure out how to support service organizations in using the tool to work through it with people, but ultimately those folks will still get to decide what it is that matters to them. We see this as a way to also open the door and integrate services, get a conversation going among very different kinds of service providers about how to support people who've been impacted by sexual violence, in a way that will be informed by the people most impacted and that will also create a network of learning in this area for all of us to learn from each other.

We'll have our first forum with the service providers in June. And—you know, I'm 58, and every now and then the thoughts go right out of my head. I don't understand why this happens to me. Whatever.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I hear you.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Anyway, we're excited about this. We do think this is a game-changer in a lot of ways. We've constructed it in such a way that we can share this with other communities, because there's a lot of very universal information here about sexual abuse and violence, child sexual abuse, sexual violence statistics, myths and stereotypes, so that people can find information. This was one of the things we heard: "Where can I go and find information that will help me sort of place myself and think about what's next for me?" We will have a whole section on, "I've just discovered that I was sexually abused as a child. What should I do? Who might I talk to?"—so again, stories and strategies from people who've been there, who understand.

The social enterprise piece of this is that we think that we can share this with other communities, and all they would have to add to their site is their own service experiences. We've constructed the lifespan tool in such a way that it can be shared in other places. We would work

with them. We'll develop the templates and whatnot so that they would just add that service line. So we see this as a way to sustain the project.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: I'm finished.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. You're right on time, then.

Our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. That's incredible. How difficult is it for the service providers to, say, adapt a program like this for you? Do you hear stories? Are there roadblocks? Are they kind of given money in envelopes that they can freely do this if they want to? Is there going to be a problem, do you think?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: In terms of putting it into service organizations, there will be challenges, for sure, but what the service providers—we've got a lot of great leadership, and people who say that what we're doing isn't working, that we need to do things differently. So a willingness to try things, a willingness to experiment, which is another really important piece for funders to know—the Department of Justice has been amazing in letting us work on an emergent project that can shift and change as we're going. That's allowed us, I think, to create this environment where the possibility of landing this in very different kinds of environments, like employment services, as well as the women's shelter and the family counselling agency—very different kinds of people who share a common bond of working with people who've been impacted, who may or may not know it. So I think the will is there—

Ms. Laurie Scott: So when you say "justice department"—sorry—what do you mean?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: It's a federal grant.

Ms. Laurie Scott: A federal grant to develop it?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: It was a federal grant that got us going.

Ms. Laurie Scott: To get you going, and then it's the provincial overlay. Okay, thank you. That's probably all I have. I'm being cut off.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, Margaret. I'm very proud of my community and the work that is under way and game-changing initiatives like this. I want to acknowledge the work that you have done in the community.

You mentioned that the site was designed for people who aren't necessarily connected to the system in any way. How are you going to reach those people to let them know that the site exists? So that's one question.

The other question is also around the content: Is the content dynamic, so that as people go in and use the lifespan tool and have strategies that have worked for them that they want to share, is there an opportunity for them to upload ideas like that?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: So those are really good ideas that, absolutely, are kind of next steps, next iterations. We're creating the base program, and then that's exactly where we're going. It will be dynamic in terms of it needs to be—because it's a community approach that we want as well. This isn't a project that starts and stops. We're figuring out ways to keep it moving and learning and developing—evolving as well. So yes, that's very much a part of what makes this, I think.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: And how are you going to reach people who aren't connected to the system?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Well, we have a communication group, right? We have people of all ages who have various degrees of expertise with social media, and people who have been impacted by sexual violence are connected in ways out there that we don't necessarily see. They are the ones who will drive this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here today. I guess I have similar questions. What are the next steps for Opening the Circle? How many people have participated in this project?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: We have about 70 people who have contributed to the formation of what we have right now. So we're still in the beta phase. We haven't launched it, but we will do a community launch next month. And then the next steps are twofold. The communication piece—we're also collecting data. We'll be analyzing how people are using the system, what's useful, what's not useful, and then piloting with the service organizations to begin the process of the integration among sectors within the community. So that'll be the next big piece.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: So basically right now you're piloting it, and then you're going to partner with—I don't know—agencies or community centres that will ultimately use that program.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: It will be a resource for them, as well, because their front-line workers often report that they don't know what to do with people who disclose to them. They come in for another reason, and they're not sure what to do either. So your question about—there's a real benefit to service organizations being able to support people in a meaningful way.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We very much appreciate your presentation to this committee today. Thanks again.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: I appreciate the opportunity. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience.

We will now call on our next presenter, Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services of Halton to come forward. Do we have Kathryn Baker-Reed in the room? No?

Ms. Sara Casselman: She's not here yet.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Let's skip ahead and see if we have representatives from the YWCA of Toronto. Okay.

Next down, we have Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre—I guess we're way ahead of schedule now.

Committee members, I will ask you just to take a five-minute break, and we'll reconvene in just a few minutes. We'll see how we're doing with our next presenters. Thank you.

The committee recessed from 1419 to 1421.

YWCA TORONTO

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, we're going to move ahead with our next arrival, Maureen Adams with the YWCA of Toronto. Maureen, I would ask you to come forward and have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you'd like.

Ms. Maureen Adams: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee and that will be followed by questions. For the record, when you begin just say your name and your organization. Begin anytime.

Ms. Maureen Adams: Thank you so much. Maureen Adams, YWCA of Toronto. I wanted to thank the committee for rescheduling me. I was actually scheduled to appear before you in Toronto last week—why would YWCA Toronto be in Kitchener-Waterloo?—but there was a death in my family.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Oh, I'm sorry.

Ms. Maureen Adams: That's okay. I'm very happy to be here today.

I'm the director of advocacy and communications at the YWCA Toronto. We're actually the largest women's organization in the country. We provide direct services and tackle systemic issues that create barriers to women's equality. We help women escape and recover from violence, move out of poverty and gain economic security, and access housing that is safe and affordable. We also work with girls between the ages of nine and 13 and we build their leadership and critical thinking skills. We serve about 11,000 women and girls in 30 programs in 12 communities across the city of Toronto.

In the 15 minutes I have with you today, I thought I would focus on three issues:

- the importance of public awareness and prevention programs to change attitudes and behaviours against sexual violence and harassment;

- the critical need for trauma counselling to help women and girls who have been sexually assaulted recover from that assault; and

- the importance of independent legal representation for sexual assault survivors to ensure that their rights are protected and also that the men who assault them are held accountable.

As you know, when we're talking about sexual assault we always try to be guided by the voices of survivors, so I wanted to start with reading a small passage from a remarkable book, *One Hour in Paris: A True Story of Rape and Recovery*, by Canadian author Karyn Freedman:

"There are images in my head that do not belong there. No matter how hard I try to get rid of them they will not go away. It is as if they are permanently seared into my brain and written over my body. Over the years I have tried to talk them out, and when that didn't work, I talked louder. I have tried to write them out, paint them out, fight them out, and by sheer determination, will them out. Occasionally, in darker moments, I have tried to drink them out. These efforts were not futile (except for the drinking). Each one helped in lessening the hold the images have over me, but none was entirely successful. They are mine for life ... and that just might be the most important thing we can learn about psychological trauma.

"It has been over 20 years since I was raped ... and I now understand that trauma is not something from which one ever fully recovers. It is a chronic condition, and that means that rape is forever my shadow. It tracks me everywhere. It follows me up the street to my local coffee shop in the middle of the day, and when I come home from a late night out with friends, it is just over my shoulder. It is with me at work, in the classroom and at play, and in the dressing room before one of my recreational hockey games. Most especially it stalks me in the bedroom.

"Twenty years later and I still have to work to put myself to sleep at night. And like most survivors of sexual violence I am anything but carefree with my body. I am never fully uninhibited when lying naked with another person, and I have to set up strict boundaries—no touching my head, no dark rooms, no spontaneous moves—in order to protect myself from the images that will otherwise wash over me."

This passage powerfully describes the long-term impact of violence and trauma on sex-assault survivors. The tragedy is that 460,000 women and girls are sexually assaulted in Canada every year, and each one of them has their own unique story about the impact that sexual violence has had on their lives.

This is not the type of world we envision for our daughters, our sisters, our mothers, our friends and neighbours. This is why the select committee's work and the province's It's Never Okay strategy are so critical to ending sexual violence and harassment. It's also why women are speaking up in online campaigns like #BeenRapedNeverReported, and why two 13-year-old girls organized a petition on sexual consent that was signed by over 40,000 people.

It is why there is a renewed commitment—including by men—to stopping violence against women. The last few years have been difficult for women and girls but not unusual: Rehtaeh Parsons, Rinelle Harper, female students at Saint Mary's University, Dalhousie and UBC—and of course the allegations against Jian

Ghomeshi. The public is behind change and is behind solutions. Now is the time for bold action.

Beginning in January of this year, YWCA Toronto has been holding consultations with front-line staff and participants, asking them about the systemic issues that the association should focus on. So far, we've met with 150 participants and we're halfway there. Not surprisingly, violence against women has been identified as a top priority in each and every consultation. This is what the women and girls have told us:

We need to educate boys and men to stop assaulting and harassing women and girls as we go about our normal lives, in our homes, when we are at school or on campus, when we are online, at work, or in the community at large. We have the right to go about our lives without the fear of violence and to live in a world where we are safe at any time of the day or night.

Sexual violence is one of the most traumatizing forms of violence that can happen to us. It's an unacceptable violation of our bodies, our integrity, and our place in the world. Counsellors need to know the impact that trauma has on us and recognize the unique process that we each need to go through to recover from assault.

If we are involved in any legal procedure related to violence against us, we must be fully informed about our legal rights and options and be provided with legal help when we need it.

In other words, there needs to be a continuum of strategies, from changing awareness and behaviour to crisis and trauma counselling, from training and education to legislative change and reform. But most importantly, we must have the courage to develop new ways of tackling sex assault, because what we are doing now is simply not working.

I want to talk about the three issues. First is the public awareness and prevention programs.

There is strong support for the new Who Will You Help? public awareness campaign, particularly its focus on bystander awareness. It is a very accessible campaign, touching on very real and recognizable scenarios to most of us, and it's changing the dialogue about sexual assault and harassment and what people need to do to stop it. The only advice we would give on this is to ensure that in cases where people do intervene and attitudes do begin to shift, there are appropriate community, health, education and legal resources at the back end to support the public awareness campaign.

The revisions to the sex education curriculum also have strong support, especially related to sexual health, consent and online safety. Even though there is opposition to these changes, they are critically important in developing healthy, informed young people. We urge the committee to recommend that the government remain steadfast in implementing the new sex ed curriculum in the fall of 2015.

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Participants in our YWCA Toronto girls' centre have also identified the need to address pornography. They are telling us that its prevalence is changing the way young

men define their expectations about sexual behaviour and relationships. From the girls' perspective, this behaviour is not only unhealthy but unsafe, with elements of violence that are becoming normalized.

Girls also told us about the need for prevention and public awareness programs that are youth-led and media-savvy, including social media, of course, and that engage girls on issues such as violence and sexual exploitation, healthy relationships, critical thinking and social change. Girls want gender-specific programs where they have the space to talk about violence against women in an open and safe and non-threatening environment.

We urge the committee to recommend that permanent funding be put in place for girls' prevention, awareness and leadership programs, particularly in recognition of the disproportionate impact that violence has on women and girls.

Trauma counselling: Women respond to and recover from trauma differently and there is no one intervention that works well for all survivors. Some women prefer individual counselling; others prefer group or peer-led supports. Some are helped through art therapies such as dance, visual arts, music or journaling, others through spiritual work, body work or fighting for social change. Some require specialized intervention, such as sexually exploited women or girls who may be sex-trafficked, indigenous women, newcomers, or women and girls with addiction or mental health issues.

The length of time it takes women to recover can also vary. This depends very much on the nature of the actual sexual violence, whether there have been multiple assaults, the relationship with the offender, whether there are family and community supports, the response from first responders, whether a woman goes to trial or not, and the overall well-being of the woman and her community prior to the assault.

Healing is complex and the responses and services need to respond effectively to this complexity. Participants in our YWCA Toronto violence-again-women programs have told us that they cannot access the trauma counselling that they need because they cannot afford counselling fees. There are long waiting lists. Some counsellors are inadequately trained. Many programs are short-term in nature or not available at all, such as specialized addiction detox beds for women. Most importantly, the types of alternative supports I just mentioned that survivors find most helpful are generally not funded at all.

We urge the committee to recommend that trauma counselling be defined broadly to encompass the different interventions and specialized supports that women need to recover from sexual violence and that mechanisms be put in place to ensure that trauma counselling is timely, accessible and affordable, particularly for low-income women.

Legal representation: As we all know, and you've probably heard, sexual violence is one of the most under-reported of all violent crimes. For every 1,000 assaults, only 33 are reported. Twelve result in charges, six are

prosecuted, and only three lead to a conviction. Clearly, the system is broken and failing women, who represent well over 90% of those who are sexually assaulted.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Adams, you have one minute remaining, or you can continue and we'll forgo the questions—your choice.

Ms. Maureen Adams: I thought I timed this. I'll go a little further, but not much.

You probably know why women aren't reporting sex assaults. You've probably heard that, so I'll pass on that. But I do want to say that in terms of legal representation, the Supreme Court has given clear directions: the rape shield law, provisions about medical and other records, not introducing rape myths in court, and clarity on the meaning of consent. The issue here is that many women don't know about this, do not know it confers rights upon them, and they have no access to free legal, independent representation, advice about how the court works, what evidence is and is not admissible, what their rights are, how they can be cross-examined and what the role of the judge and crown is. Nor do they know that sometimes—it's very rare, but sometimes—they can make legal submissions to protect their rights during the course of a trial.

Some who have financial means can retain counsel at their own expense, but this is not the reality for most women who have been sexually assaulted, and as we know, the judge and crown cannot be their advocates.

The law is complex, the court system is complex and most of us, let alone those experiencing trauma, cannot expect to be knowledgeable about or able to interpret complex legal issues and decisions on our own.

Participants have told us they are afraid to navigate the criminal justice system on their own and feel disadvantaged and intimidated when they do. Some fear for their lives because they have experienced violence or may have been harassed. For these reasons, we strongly support the provincial action plan to develop a new prosecution model, a pilot project with legal representation and, particularly, working with the law society to ensure that defence counsel upholds Canada's rape shield laws.

This is an area that will require openness, courage and determination as it is an attempt to balance and protect the rights of sexual assault complainants while maintaining the rights of the accused. These suggested reforms are necessary, for if nothing significant changes, things will stay the same: low reporting, low conviction rates and no consequences for the men who continue to sexually assault women.

We urge the committee—this is my last recommendation—to recommend that in all cases where sexual assault survivors are attempting to exercise their legal rights, whether it be in the criminal or civil courts, a claim before the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board or a complaints process arising out of an incident on campus, they be fully informed about their legal rights and options, and be provided with free, independent legal representation throughout the process.

This concludes my presentation. I'd be happy to answer questions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We will do that. We've got about 30 seconds per caucus—so very concise—beginning with MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: If there was one priority area that we should focus on first while we're moving forward to address all these, would it be prevention, supports for survivors or improving the criminal justice system?

Ms. Maureen Adams: Which one would I go for first?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: To address first.

Ms. Maureen Adams: To tell you the truth, I can't really pick.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Okay. All important?

Ms. Maureen Adams: Because they all go hand in hand.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: They all go hand in hand. Okay, thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): From our PC caucus, MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for accommodating and wanting to come to present to us. I think if you could just submit especially the legal specifics that you didn't get to, and give that written submission to our Clerk so that we can see for our report-writing, that would be excellent. Thank you very much again.

Ms. Maureen Adams: You're very welcome.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I was going to make the same point, too. If you wouldn't mind either emailing us your speaking notes today or giving us a hard copy, we'd appreciate that.

Ms. Maureen Adams: I actually brought a hard copy for all of you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We will get that from you.

Ms. Maureen Adams: Okay. I didn't know if you wanted to be carrying them all over.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll do that in just a moment. We're just going to take a final comment from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. Earlier today, we heard a powerful presentation from a woman about her own experience in the justice system. You echoed a lot of what she had shared with us.

Now, you identified the law society as sort of the main place where there should be accountability for ensuring that the rape shield law and other legal protections for women are upheld. Is there some onus on judges as well? You didn't mention—

Ms. Maureen Adams: Yes. In the back of my report, I've put a number of background documents that I've used that helped me prepare for this today. I would say that there is lots of debate here and around the world about what role a judge can play in court. There was a case recently, in the last year, where a judge did attempt to intervene when there was a defence counsel who was pushing too hard on the rape shield law. That was appealed to the Court of Appeal, I believe, in Alberta, and it was overturned on the basis that the judge did not act impartially and that it was not the judge's role.

So one of the issues in all the reviews that are going on about this issue about legal representation is ensuring that women's charter and privacy rights are protected, but the judge can't protect them and the crown can't protect them because they are impartial arbiters in the decision. That's one of the problems.

In Europe, it's a different court system. A judge has something called an inquisitorial role and actually can ask questions for everyone in the room, but in our system in Canada, Britain, New Zealand and Australia, it's more of an adversarial system, so the crown and the judges have to be seen to be independent and not advocates for the women—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Maureen Adams, we are very thankful for your coming to Kitchener-Waterloo today from Toronto.

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Ms. Maureen Adams: You're welcome.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): There are four area MPPs in the Kitchener-Waterloo/Cambridge area who are sitting on this committee, so you got to experience the drive that we do all the time.

Ms. Maureen Adams: I came on a different lovely rural route, and it was fabulous. Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's the way to do it. Thank you.

WATERLOO REGION SEXUAL ASSAULT/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TREATMENT CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call on our next presenters—committee members, we're skipping ahead as we are still waiting for our Halton presenters. I would call on Casey Cruikshank and Katie Gosse.

Ladies, come forward and take a seat; make yourselves comfortable. Pour yourselves some water if you would like that. You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please begin by stating your names and the organization that you represent. Begin any time.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I'm Casey Cruikshank, and I'm the director for the Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, which is a hospital-based program.

Ms. Katie Gosse: My name is Katie Gosse, and I'm a social worker with the treatment centre, under Casey.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I'm going to begin today. I know that Katie had hoped to bring someone with her, and she will explain why she isn't here.

My presentation today represents those experiences and recommendations from people who have accessed our team at the Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre as well as our social worker and nursing team members and myself. As I mentioned, Katie Gosse is with me, and she had hoped to bring JB with her.

I want to first explain the context from which I speak. The Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre is a program of St. Mary's hospital since 1992 and provides an immediate response to those living in the region who have experienced a recent sexual or domestic assault. Annually, we see a little over 400 people, and the majority are female. Two thirds access us through the hospital, and another one third contact us for counselling only.

The program is quite tight. It's myself, 12 social workers who represent 1.8 full-time equivalents and 12 nurses who represent 1.3 full-time equivalent nurses. They work on an on-call basis so that we can be responding to people immediately when they come to the hospital because of an assault. Our program is the only hospital-based program in the province that has nurses and social workers on call, and we found that that has been a benefit to people who come in to use our service. As a matter of fact, 30% of those who come in to see us do continue to see that same social worker for follow-up. In a sense, when the person comes into the hospital and is examined for forensic evidence or photographs, the social worker is able to be with that person and ground her while the nurse is collecting forensic evidence. Again, we are the only centre in the province that has the nurse and social worker on call, and we would really recommend that that be something that the committee could consider.

We see people for six sessions. Katie is going to talk a little bit about that. That works for some people, but it doesn't work for a number of other people who are traumatized and needing a lot more than six hours with a counsellor, a social worker. We would hope that there might be some room to look at something more like six to 20 hours for victims, minimum, for counselling.

In our region, we have a specially trained group of partners. Their focus is domestic violence. Most of those are housed under one roof, referred to as the Family Violence Project. The partners include the detectives, family and children's services, assistant crown attorney, victim services, and legal aid as well as our own follow-up social worker and nursing. All partners have specialized training related to domestic violence. The proximity of the service, I believe, really benefits victims. It means that the partners have an expanded understanding of the roles of each service and can make better and quicker referrals to each other on behalf of clients and with the client's permission. There are regular joint in-service consultations, resulting, I think, in increased awareness, sensitivity, learning and advocacy among the partners. I believe the result is greater dignity, equality and respect to those who do access us.

This partnership exists where the assault has occurred to a person and where there has been an intimate relationship and there has been physical violence. A partnership among services where the accused is an acquaintance, a stranger or a person in a position of trust, such as a parent or a teacher, does not exist, and the benefits noted earlier in terms of that proximity with the partnership just don't

exist, I don't believe, to the same extent. I would recommend that services be provided from a partnership basis for those who experience assaults by acquaintances, strangers etc., similar to those noted in the Family Violence Project.

As a team, we also want to recognize and thank the provincial government's Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment, especially for the recent scenarios that are being aired on TV addressing bystander behaviour to sexual violence and harassment, because what we have found is that there has been lots of discussion about those scenarios, and we think this is leading to some change in behaviours that we hope will help to end misogyny. Our hope is that there are going to be more of those.

Our members have been disturbed by the stories we have heard from victims of sexual violence, including video games and music glorifying sexual violence and, in particular, date rape; victim blaming; a lack of safety for women to speak out; a lack of societal support; and verbal sexual comments thrown at women by men. More recently, it was well publicized by the sports broadcaster who was verbally harassed by a group of men.

Our team members and those who access our service are encouraging that there be:

- an increase in education and outreach that targets healthy relationships;
- an increase in airing of scenarios similar to what we just spoke about that challenge sexual violence;
- increased budgets for counselling;
- an understanding in court that light sentences for offenders send a negative message to victims and perpetuate the sense of victim blaming;
- more accountability in universities and colleges; and

—marketing of hospital-based centres to encourage victims to come forward and get immediate help.

We are concerned that the criminal justice and court response to sexual violence by an offender known to a victim appears to be treated as not so serious. We suspect that if the crime is not treated seriously, the offender will not change his behaviour and he's at risk for repeat offending.

We are most grateful to Ms. Wynne's government for the commitment to end misogyny in Ontario, to make it a safer province and for inviting us to provide input and recommendations from those who have been intimately impacted by experiences of sexual violence and harassment. Thank you.

Ms. Katie Gosse: I would like to go along with Casey and just let you know the appreciation of those commercials and how I've had many discussions with my clients about them, and even just the general public. I really think they have a very clear and powerful message. I'd just like to say that as well.

My hope for today was that my client who is a 16-year-old sexual assault victim would be able to attend, as she was hoping to write a letter to the committee in terms of recommendations for services and explain her experi-

ence of the services that she received. Unfortunately, she is not able to attend today because she is having some physical health problems that have required her to be in the hospital for the past two days. I spoke with her and tried to encourage her to share with me in letter format, as she was very tired and weak, what I could share with you. Unfortunately, I didn't receive anything directly from her, but I will do my best to speak on her behalf and—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Katie, I just want to step in and say that if and when you do receive a letter from her, you can certainly submit it to the Clerk's office.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Absolutely. That's great. That's great to know.

Like I said, my client is a 16-year-old sexual assault victim. I met her in the emergency department. I was the social worker on call, and I was able to be with her while she had the sexual assault examination kit completed. Just as Casey did say, the benefit of me being in that room with her was that it was as if it was an extra session. We have six sessions that we are allotted to meet with each client. My presence in that hospital room with her is a huge engagement strategy because I am there with her experiencing what she's going through—not directly—and encouraging her through it, so that the next time that we meet she doesn't have to explain her story yet again to another person, to a new person, that retelling of the story. I was there; I get it—"Okay. Where are we going from here?" Just that familiarity with the social worker, I think, provides a huge level of comfort and ability to engage and have a more beneficial time when we meet together.

1450

I really believe that our centre does an excellent job of addressing the emotional and cognitive trauma that is associated with sexual assault. One thing that I have noticed in a lot of my clients, who actually tend to be young females around the age of 16 to about 21, is that a huge complaint is the physical impact that the trauma has on them. I believe that when you go through an experience such as a sexual assault, it impacts every part of your being. Our services, as social workers, can address the emotional and cognitive issues that arise, but when clients are complaining that they can't sleep at night, that they have constant tension in their body, that they're experiencing physical pain—for example, having to go to the hospital with my current client—I directly correlate that to their experience of sexual assault.

With the allotted time of six sessions, we have very limited ability to address those concerns, which is a huge part of their healing because that is a constant feeling that they have, that there is not a lot of relief or remedies that they feel they can address because it's just always there. I believe that if we were given more time than just the six sessions, which essentially limits us to crisis counselling, we could really connect more and provide more direct interventions that help relieve some of the physical pain that the victims are experiencing.

As well, along with these six sessions, is that clients may feel—that is explained to them from the beginning: “These are our services and this is how we can help you.” Sexual assault is such a huge topic that I think we know and they know cannot be covered in six hours. From my education and the research that I’ve done, most evidence-based interventions and therapies recommend a minimum of eight to 12 sessions in order to fully engage with a client, develop goals, practise interventions and really solidify those goals, so that they know that when they are no longer receiving our services, when they’re out in the community on their own, those are going to be something that they can rely on themselves—so just creating that independence and that self-empowerment to address their own trauma.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Katie, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Well, that’s very timely, because I think that’s it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You’re well ahead of schedule. Thank you. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for coming here. I wasn’t aware that the Waterloo region hospital was the only hospital that—

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: It’s the only one that has the nurse and social worker on call together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. I think it’s a marvellous model that needs to be implemented across the province. You gave us a good backup; we’ve been hearing about the need for more sessions, so you both addressed that incredibly well.

I just have to look to my note to see what else I was going to ask you here. Do you find that, in the case of the 16-year-old—I don’t know how she arrived at the hospital, if she came by ambulance, but I just wondered about the hospital setting. Is that comfortable for people to have the first contact, especially if we’re talking about young girls, right? Would they think first—does it appear cold? It’s hard to go to the police, first off. So I don’t know if you want to expand on that setting, how successful you are, if things should be done differently.

Ms. Katie Gosse: We have two locations, so we service Cambridge Memorial Hospital as well as St. Mary’s General Hospital, and at St. Mary’s General Hospital we have—well, we have our own safe space at each hospital, but St. Mary’s is more up to date and renovated. Through donations we had some comfortable furniture and it was painted and there are some pictures of flowers. It’s a lot more calm and quiet, and comforting to the victim. It’s a huge benefit for us. We take them from a crowded, noisy emergency department to a more intimate space that’s locked, it’s key-card access, so no one can just walk in. A doctor’s not just going to walk in, or a male, or someone of the other gender that may frighten them. That’s a huge benefit. Cambridge isn’t quite as nice, unfortunately.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Maybe I can just add something to that too. One of the things that the team members

will ask is if it’s okay for the director to give them a call to see how things went. My question to people who do access the emergency services is, “Was it what you expected?” And the response I get over and over again is, “I didn’t know what to expect.”

Coming to the hospital, they were worried about pregnancy, they were worried about HIV, they were worried about disease. That’s what drove them to the hospital: their safety.

Then, as Katie had mentioned, we come into the hospital within 45 minutes—it’s usually sooner—and then we take them away from the emergency department to a nice, safe place that’s just for them. It was put together with input from victims who had used our service to say, “This is what you need.”

We do our best, but I think your question around coming to the hospital and what it’s like for a 16-year-old is a good one. I think the fear of disease and pregnancy and other things is probably what drives them.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. Again, well done.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next questions for you are from our NDP caucus. MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you. Casey, you were talking about the Family Violence Project and I think that’s really in keeping with the same theme, that they are victim-centred services, right? Do you want to expand on some of the victim services that are co-located and the importance of—I think you called it the proximity—of those services?

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Yes, sure. It came together in about 2006. We actually were homeless, our centre. We ended up there in terms of renting space. Then the police started a domestic violence team, and in conversation with them they decided to come to a place called Carizon. It used to be called the Catholic Family Counselling Centre—

Ms. Catherine Fife: And Mosaic.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: And Mosaic, yes. I hope it doesn’t change the name again. But the bottom line, I think, is that a number of us have been down to San Diego, where they have a model—it’s called the Family Justice Center. It’s very justice-focused. So we tried to replicate it but not make it justice-focused, make it victim-focused. With the police and myself and the Catholic Family Counselling Centre, we started working on other people, like the shelter, like family and children’s services, like the crown attorney, like legal aid and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program to come. Basically, they’re renting space. We’re all renters and we’re all supported by our various ministries.

But the fact that we’re all on one floor, and we can walk down the hall and say, “There’s a woman down here who would like to talk to the police. She knows that you might have to lay charges but she needs to talk to you.” Or to say to somebody, “I think you’re going to need some help in protecting your children. Family and children’s services is just around the corner, let’s go get them.”

We all know each other, and we know each other's roles and it just feels like a better service.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It is.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Thanks.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And our final questions for you are from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much. As a former emerg nurse at Cambridge Memorial Hospital, I can't tell you how grateful I was as a triage nurse to be able to call your centre and direct everybody out of my very busy and non-private emerg to another area, which leads me to looking at your best practices and the integration of services that we have here in Waterloo region. Can you see it being beneficial to roll that out across the province?

1500

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Are you referring to the Family Violence Project, or are you referring to our model—

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Your model, because you've got, as I said, almost wraparound services in your own centre right at the moment of truth, including your nurses who do the rape kits etc.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I'd love to see it, because there are 35 hospital base centres. How we became different is because I didn't realize as a new manager that you really should get permission around your budget. My background is social work, and I went to the women who I had worked with—

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: That's what we do, social workers.

Interjections.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Ask forgiveness.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I invited a number of women who I had worked with in the past to come and meet with me, some in groups and some one-to-one. I said, "We've got this money coming down the pike to develop this program. What do you think we should do?" We talked about the services that were already in the province; there were about 25 centres at that time. They all had one nurse coming in at 3 o'clock in the morning—and expecting to support the victim, her family, be involved with Family and Children's Services and the police. I thought, "How can you do that to one person at 3 o'clock in the morning?"

The women said that, in their experience, they had gone through the emergency department, and how frightening it was when people didn't know how to support them. They wanted somebody at their head basically to ground them; so the nurse could collect forensic evidence—excuse me—between their legs, swabs and all sorts of very intrusive things. It feels like a second assault.

They said, "If you're going to get a social worker, if you've got one FTE for a social worker, why don't you make her on call, too?" I said, "Okay, well, that's what we'll do." So that's what we did. I think it is a good

model. I think that it allows the nurse to collect forensic evidence, give the medication, know that she's going to go to court on that, and yet help to ground the victim and get through it.

Ms. Katie Gosse: If I could add as well, I was able to attend the Ontario conference of all of our centres and was able to network and communicate with some of the other service providers in different regions. When they found out that we had a social worker attending—"Wow, that's amazing." Some of the stories of their own fears of attending in the middle of the night by themselves in a small room—with a population that we work with that is very vulnerable, unpredictable, can claim a lot of things. For workers' safety—physical safety, emotional safety, all those safety concerns for workers—I feel way more focused on meeting the needs of the client than worrying about what I'm missing or something else.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Forensic evidence.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Yes, exactly.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Katie Gosse, thank you very much. Casey Cruikshank, I've had the honour of telling your story now for over two decades in a different capacity. Thank you both very much for the important work that you're doing in this community.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Thank you.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Thank you so much for the invitation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

COMMUNITY JUSTICE INITIATIVES

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter to come forward. We're a little bit ahead of schedule. I'm going to call on Chris Cowie with the Community Justice Initiatives to come forward.

Good afternoon, Chris. Good to see you.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Well, that was quite the timing, wasn't it?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just take a seat wherever you like. Pour yourself some water if you wish to do so. Chris, you're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee. That will be followed by questions for you. Please begin by stating your name for the record and the name of your organization.

Mr. Chris Cowie: I'm Chris Cowie, and I'm the executive director of Community Justice Initiatives, which has been alive and well for quite some time in this community—really began the very first restorative justice program. I wanted to talk a little bit about that.

Restorative justice is not often the first thought when it comes to issues of sexual abuse, when it comes to resolving issues of sexual harm. With some of the things that we've been learning over the last number of years, we really feel that it needs to play a bigger role in this.

I'm often asked to speak about restorative justice and really just talk about what it is. That's a difficult thing to do in a very short period of time, but I do feel the need to talk a little bit about our program where we address

sexual harm by first off just talking a little bit about restorative justice.

Essentially, restorative justice happens when we're able to set aside our natural desire for revenge and retribution where harm has been done, where crime has taken place or where conflict has happened and when we have perpetrators who are willing to accept responsibility for what they've done, who are not trying to minimize the impact of their crime and certainly not trying to deny that they've committed a crime. We can bring those people together and we have the ingredients for a restorative process. A restorative process really seeks to restore what has been lost through various types of conflict and crime.

Our flagship program is really our victim-offender reconciliation program, where we receive in the area of about 100 referrals a year that come directly from adult court. We deal a lot with assaults, break-and-enter and theft, assault with a deadly weapon and, to a certain extent, sexual assaults as well. What we do is we do extensive work with the victims and the offenders ahead of time and prepare them for being able to come in and meet. Then, we facilitate meetings between them so they can arrive at their own solutions in a way that is really consistent with their own values and the things that are important to them.

When we talk about things like that in the context of sexual harm, sexual crime, a lot of people end up getting a little bit afraid. Yet, we've developed a program where we work with people in that context, and we've had tremendous success with doing extensive case development work and then bringing people together to resolve some of these issues.

Our process is called facilitated dialogue. It really recognizes that where sexual harm occurs—first of all, as you've probably been hearing for months and months and months, most of this takes place within family contexts. It takes place between people who know each other. We have sexual crime that happens in other kinds of contexts as well, but our program is particularly identifying these types of harms that have taken place.

What we do is, we do extensive work ahead of time with the people who are actually involved to prepare them to be able to meet and to resolve things. I'll give you a couple of examples. We received a phone call several months ago from someone who said, "I was routinely abused by my father beginning at age 12. This went on until I was age 17. But I had a brother who was two years older than me. Up until the time I was 12, we were a pretty normal kind of family and I got along well with my brother. He knew what was going on, and we had no real discussion about it. We never really talked about it."

By the time that he turned 17, he left and moved out of the house. She finally left when she was 18 years old. She said, "I've not talked with my brother since, and that was 20 years ago." Not only did the harm impact her, but it also impacted that relationship. She had done years and years of work to try to address some of the issues that she

was going through and the struggles—counselling and things like that—but she really felt that she needed to have a conversation with her brother, and she really didn't know how. She heard about our program and she said, "Would you be able to help me?" We said yes.

We hooked up with the brother. We spent a lot of time with him, talking through a lot of the things and determining what it was that he did know and what it was that he needed to bring forward in a conversation. In that particular case, we ended up bringing them together after doing that work, and they met only one time with our assistance. Within a couple of hours, they were talking and it was really a life-giving thing for both of them. They went on to maintain that relationship, and they still do.

We had another person who called us—this began just about a year and a half ago. This was a person who was in a committed same-sex relationship and had been for 10 years, and said, "My previous relationship lasted for exactly 10 years and then it came apart. It came apart because of issues that have never been dealt with because of my being sexually abused when I was young. When we could not deal with those things in our relationship, the relationship crumbled. The relationship I'm in now is a very serious one; I really love this person very much. It's going down exactly the same path, but I have no idea how to have a conversation about those particular things. I don't know what to do with that. Can you help us?"

So, again, we did extensive work with them individually and then eventually facilitated about seven or eight conversations, and that's work that is still ongoing.

1510

We received a case not that long ago which was a really serious one where a 17-year-old girl at a wedding, a family gathering with lots of family, was approached in a very inappropriate way by an uncle, which then gave way to a sexual assault. It took place where there were witnesses but nobody who was willing to talk about it, and they were not family members.

This young girl buried that and just did not talk about it for almost a year. Then she finally disclosed to her mother. It was her mother's brother who was the actual uncle who had committed this offence. Her mother, who worked in—this was quite far away that this actually took place—the field of restorative justice as well understood that there were more restorative responses to being able to deal with this kind of thing. Her daughter was most afraid that she would actually have to go through the system, charge her uncle, and then have to go through all the court things and whatever. This is what had inhibited her from bringing this forward, along with feeling just horrible about what had happened.

So her mother actually did a search to see who was doing work like this. We were the only organization that was doing that work, and so they reached out to us and they asked if we could have some involvement in their situation. We said yes.

A few of the family members were actually afraid of doing that, so they chose to go through a different

process initially, where they brought a number of family members together. This actually took place in a church context. It was being facilitated by a pastor who ended up giving us a call pretty quickly, because he felt he was just really in over his head and didn't really know how to manage things. But what they did was they brought a number of people from the family together, the immediate family. So it was the uncle—it was the mother and father of the victim, the actual uncle and his wife, and the grandparents as well. The one rule that they brought in was to say that the young girl who was going to disclose what had happened did not want to be asked any questions. She felt very uncomfortable; she just wanted to tell her story.

As soon as she told the story, the questions began to fly. There wasn't an adequate process in place to be able to hold that back, and particularly the uncle's wife began asking things like, "When could that have happened?" and "What happened with this?" and questions that began to indicate that people in the family actually didn't believe her story, which is about the worst thing that can happen. I think you've probably heard that over and over again as well. It becomes a re-traumatizing thing when that happens.

At that point, we got the phone call from this pastor, who said, "Listen, I don't really know how to deal with this situation." So we began to meet with these people individually. As it turned out, this young woman who was the victim really did not feel like getting back in the room with anybody again, at least a group of people. She was quite scared because of this whole thing. However, the parents were now extremely protective of their daughter and felt outraged at the grandparents who had indicated that they did not believe this story. This was something that was splitting the family and was keeping them apart.

So what we chose to do was to meet with them individually first and then bring those groups together. We brought the parents of the victim together with the grandparents, and as we began facilitating some of the discussion there, it became very apparent that the grandparents actually in their hearts did believe the story, but that it was too difficult to be able to admit. At one point, the grandma actually said, "If we believe her story, then I have to believe that my son committed a sexual offence, and I wasn't willing to accept that."

The reason this story is important is that it illustrates so much of what happens around these things that also needs to be dealt with. The context in which these things happen is extremely important to any kind of meaningful healing that is going to be long-term.

After that had happened, the grandfather felt very, very strongly that now they needed to meet with the uncle and his wife, who was now pregnant as well. So we did extensive case development, again working with them individually to prepare them for what they needed to talk about.

I'll just take a little aside here for a moment. One of the things that I believe very strongly about restorative

justice: The word "mediator" is often used for the people who are helping people out. I don't think it's a really good term. A mediator is usually thought of as a person who comes in, listens to one story, listens to another, and then begins to suggest maybe certain compromises that need to be made or what a person can do to help someone else. Our way of doing things is not that. It's to have as much discussion as possible so that the people are actually telling their own story. It's never about a facilitator bringing forward some kind of response or some kind of a suggestion as to what would be a helpful thing. In this case, it's very much about drilling into someone's thoughts and feelings and responses to what they've heard, so that they're able to articulate exactly what kind of impact there has been.

When we finally brought the grandparents together with the person who was the perpetrator and his wife, it was a long and tedious and very difficult discussion. It started off with this perpetrator being rather defensive and really minimizing a lot of what he had done and ended up with him really coming forward and talking about it in much more detail, so that it was much more obvious that he was telling the truth and the family could actually deal with that.

There is a meeting planned now with the victim. This is now about a year and a half that we've been doing this case. Now, finally, the victim is at a place where she feels that a meeting with that person—because other people have agreed and believe her story and she doesn't feel that same level of risk. She really does believe that they're going to be able to enter into some kind of relationship again and be able to restore much of what has been lost even in the wake of such a horrible thing that has happened to her.

Many times when we are dealing with issues of sexual harm, we do the exact opposite thing. We really believe that we need to keep people completely and totally apart, and there is a time and place for that. Oftentimes it's an immediate one. It needs to be like that, but over time people begin to indicate an interest in being able to come together. Even only a few years ago, when we would get referrals from other agencies where they would say, "I don't agree with this. I don't like this process, but the person really does want to meet with the person who did this. You're the only people we know who can do that." After we have done so many of these types of cases now and the clients end up going back to those agencies—and what they're hearing is that there's a tremendous amount of healing that actually can take place. There's closure like there's never been before in these cases.

The most typical thing that I hear from people who end up participating in the process, particularly when it's a victim who comes forward and a victim who initiates the process, then we reach out and we begin to put the pieces together and eventually bring people together for a meeting or for a series of meetings—they often say, "The outcome was nothing like I expected. It didn't happen like I expected, and yet as the weeks went by following, I recognize that there was a different kind of closure here that I had not experienced before."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Chris, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Mr. Chris Cowie: This program that we operate receives no government funding. It is entirely funded by private people who care a lot about what it is that we do. One of the things that's difficult and one of the particular trends in funding is always that people want to have exactly the numbers. "Who exactly are you going to impact? How long are you going to impact them for, and what's going to be the outcome by such and such a date?" Some of the facilitated dialogue cases we do, start to finish, in about three months and other ones have been ongoing for the past three and a half years. So we're thankful to those who are so behind the work that we do in that regard, that they're willing to donate the funds to be able to do something which is a more protracted process and really invest in the healing of people who have experienced this kind of harm.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus. MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Chris, thank you very much. For those on the committee, the reputation of CJI is very strong in the community because the trickle-out effect in the community around the good work that you've done—I think the quote that's in your flyer, "It was when I was treated like a human being that I decided I better start acting like one," is a very powerful statement.

For the committee, though, we're looking at systemic issues as well. So you're advocating today for resources in the community to actually pick up the pieces, post, because that's also a prevention factor. Is that—

Mr. Chris Cowie: It's a huge prevention factor.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Absolutely, yes.

Ms. Catherine Fife: And there has to be a safe place to heal as well, right? That's been a consistent theme going forward.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Right. It's fairly well known that there's a cycle—a cycle of violence, a cycle of abuse. People who experience that, if it's not dealt with, if there is unresolved trauma—the chances of them either committing something themselves or closing their eyes to other things or participating in other things like that are very great, not to mention the personal harm that is ongoing. But this allows a full kind of healing in that way.

1520

Ms. Catherine Fife: So you want to interrupt the cycle.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Absolutely, we do.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next questions for you are from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Great to see you again, Chris. Are you chairing the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council right now?

Mr. Chris Cowie: Yes, I am.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: The right person in place, I might add. How inspiring. We, in Waterloo region, are

very proud of the work that CJI does, and I echo my colleagues around the table on that.

How do we clone you? I actually mean that. So often we hear of victims who don't want to go the justice route, who don't want to charge family members and friends because it's too difficult for one reason or another. How do we get this kind of programming to other communities that might want to start one? Can you address that?

Mr. Chris Cowie: I would say that over the last couple of years, when I speak around the work that we do, that is the question that I am asked most often.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: No kidding.

Mr. Chris Cowie: I don't have a single answer for it. I know that in this community with CJI—and it's already been mentioned that they have a tremendous reputation, but it started off with a relationship between CJI and crown attorneys who were willing to take risks and not just use minor crimes which, really, a restorative process has a minimal impact on, but take some serious cases and do something with those cases. That takes a lot of time and trust built up. In other communities there needs to be that same kind of advocacy. There needs to be that same kind of work that happens like that, to the point where we could do programs like our facilitated-dialogue program.

At the moment, though, the good news is that we were just given five years of federal funding to replicate our Stride program, which is a program we operate out of the prison for women. Basically, the purpose of that funding is to say, "Go to other communities in this country that have federal prisons for women and replicate your program with partners that are there because it's been that effective." Our victim-offender reconciliation program and our facilitated-dialogue program could each do that. There's room for this type of program in every community, but it takes that kind of training and it takes that kind of affinity within other organizations to pick it up and to go with it and to grow it.

Facilitated dialogue was something where we would get one or two referrals that would come to us, simply because we didn't advertise it a great deal, but most of our referrals now come from people who have been involved in the program. They know a dozen other hurting families that need that kind of help, and they're quick to give them our name. Those people are calling us now; a lot of them are calling us now.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes. Thanks, Chris. I appreciate you being here today. We've met before and heard some of the stories, in addition to those that you spoke to today, of how this program is working.

You talked about the outcomes and that the young woman going into it, at the end, wouldn't have thought that those outcomes would have actually been the way that they were. I don't know if you want to get into specifically what she perhaps would have thought of and then what outcomes she found at the end because of, specifically, this program.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Especially when there's a great deal of time that has taken place in between, a victim has a notion of what they think the truth really is of what was going on in the heart and the mind that drove the actions of the people who have done the things to them. Often-times, what comes out when they're talking very honestly is that there are very different motivators behind the scenes that someone didn't really expect.

At first they need to weigh out: Is this person making an excuse of this, or is this some sort of a legitimate contributor to something that may have happened? When they tell me that they have also been aching because of this over the last number of years, is that true or are they trying to sort of pull a little sympathy out of me to make this go away a little bit easier? Those are the types of things that someone needs to be able to sort through. They're not expecting to hear those things. A lot of the time they're simply expecting someone to say, "This is what I did and this is why I did it." Acknowledging still is probably the biggest thing that they need to hear.

I met a woman a little while ago who made a rather sizeable donation to our organization, and I had never seen her name before. I wondered where that came from and so I gave her a call; I do that with anyone who gives to us.

She said, "I wouldn't mind meeting with you and telling you why I did that." She was a client of this program seven years ago. That was her story. Her story was

one between her, her brother and an uncle, and it was kind of a messy story.

In the end, she said, "By the time that we all got together, I wasn't hearing the things that I thought I was going to hear, the things that I was expecting to hear or the things that I even necessarily wanted to hear. However, over time I began to realize that the things that were being said were actually the truth. I was able to tell the truth of my story, they were able to tell theirs, and mine was acknowledged. So what I was exactly hoping for didn't come to the surface, and yet I realized that"—and this woman had been through years and years of counselling. She realized that going through that actually brought a different type of closure to the whole thing for her, and she felt very satisfied with that.

Mr. Michael Harris: Great, thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Chris Cowie. I will say to you what I said to Casey Cruikshank, who spoke before you, and that is that I've had the honour of helping you to tell your story in this community for a couple of decades. Your work is very much appreciated. Thank you.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Good. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to tell our committee members that our next presenter has asked to speak to us in private. I would respectfully ask people in our audience right now if you wouldn't mind clearing the room, and we're going to need about 20 minutes.

The committee continued in closed session at 1526.

TABLE I		TABLE II	
Year	Value	Year	Value
1950	100	1955	110
1951	105	1956	115
1952	110	1957	120
1953	115	1958	125
1954	120	1959	130
1955	125	1960	135
1956	130	1961	140
1957	135	1962	145
1958	140	1963	150
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2011	405	2016	415
2012	410	2017	420
2013	415	2018	425
2014	420	2019	430
2015	425	2020	435
2016	430	2021	440
2017	435	2022	445
2018	440	2023	450
2019	445	2024	455
2020	450	2025	460
2021	455	2026	465
2022	460	2027	470
2023	465	2028	475
2024	470	2029	480
2025	475	2030	485

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 21 May 2015

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 21 mai 2015

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel



Chair: Daiene Vernile
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Thursday 21 May 2015

COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE ET DU HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Jeudi 21 mai 2015

The committee met at 0904 in the Residence Inn by Marriott Kingston Water's Edge, Kingston.

STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good morning, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. I'd like to welcome all of the presenters and guests who are here with us today.

Let me very quickly share with you the mandate of this committee. We're here to listen to the experiences of survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. However, I do want to stress that we do not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

We welcome you.

MS. BAILEY GERRITS
MS. REBECCA RAPPEPORT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our first presenters to come forward: Kingston Youth Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment. Please have a seat. Pour yourselves a glass of water, if you'd like. Make yourselves comfortable. You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee, and after that, it will be followed by questions. So please begin by stating your names and repeating the name of your organization for the record.

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: My name is Bailey Gerrits. It's not an organization; it's a report, and it's the Kingston Youth Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment.

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: My name's Rebecca Rappeport.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: Thank you. We want to thank the select committee for coming here today. We're here to present the findings and recommendations of the Kingston Youth Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment. We've brought one draft copy of our report, which is about 50 pages. It will be made available on the Kingston Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Committee's web

page in about a week's time. As well, we have some handouts that we have passed out—I believe they've been passed out—which is just a more direct handout of our recommendations and our presentation of today.

We're really excited that the government has decided to start to meaningfully address sexual violence in Ontario. The Kingston Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Committee commissioned this project. Bailey and I researched the topic. The report does not necessarily represent the views of KFACC, and all stakeholders volunteered and participated voluntarily.

I am a Kingston-based human rights advocate. I work in community inclusion and community development, and support survivors of sexual violence here in Kingston.

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: And I'm a Kingston-based doctoral student and Trudeau Scholar studying domestic violence in the news. I volunteer locally—I should say that's my passion—and I work with the domestic violence shelter, as well as the sexual assault centre. Together, we've actually been working, in the past two years, to reignite the White Ribbon Campaign in Kingston and, really, to prevent gender-based violence. This is our passion, and this report is kind of an extension of our passion.

We're going to tell you a little bit of what we found. We used a community-based research method. This project represents a first phase of researching and implementing effective prevention of youth sexual assault in the greater Kingston area. This project identifies community strengths and service gaps, as well as next steps.

We completed an extensive academic and community-based literature review and three focus groups with 30 individuals, representing 20 youth-serving and gender-based violence agencies in Kingston and area. We did follow-up interviews with 12 additional people, and we also completed an online survey that brought us an additional 30 responses.

We want to be a little direct, and we want you to come away with three key things that we need the government of Ontario to do to better support prevention efforts, both in Kingston and in other communities as well.

First, coordination is largely lacking in Kingston with respect to prevention of sexual violence. We need consistent and substantial funding to a coordinating body to develop the coordinating infrastructure to sustain preven-

tion efforts. The community—that is, Kingston—is well-positioned to begin to sustain and coordinate, and we have identified KFACC as a potential organizing body, as they have already sort of taken a leadership role in this conversation.

Funding coordination would likely include:

- providing funding for a full-time person or a team of people to coordinate prevention in Kingston;
- offering training sessions for other organizations;
- buying and reviewing prevention programming;
- developing and/or overseeing the development of prevention best practices and making those available to both youth-serving agencies as well as those who work in the area of gender-based violence;
- offering training to parents and caregivers; and
- helping organizations implement prevention programming into their job descriptions and organizational mandates.

These latter points are largely missing in Kingston and are desperately needed.

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: The second thing we really want you to take away from this is that we need more sustainable funding for primary and secondary prevention. By “primary” we mean strategies or universal interventions directed at youth or the larger population with the aim of preventing violence from occurring in the first place.

There are primary prevention strategies in place in Kingston, including the implementation of the new curriculum in the fall of 2015. However, our community assessment revealed the need for much broader primary strategies, as this form of prevention is key in shifting the conversation from reactive to proactive or from managing violence to actually ending violence.

By “secondary” we mean strategies or select interventions that target individuals who are at higher risk of being perpetrators or victims of violence, in order to reduce the frequency and severity of violent acts. We noted that key organizations in Kingston have developed potential secondary strategies, such as the St. Lawrence Youth Association, but they need funding for these individualized responses.

Almost completely missing are larger secondary strategies that address, for example, permissive peer cultures that encourage concerning violent and sexualized behaviour.

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: Third, we favour an ecological model. We explain this model more in-depth in our report, and we really encourage you to go to this report. It’s 50 pages of a lot of research, both community-based as well as academic literature. The key lesson we want to point out here from the ecological model is that prevention needs to be community-based, and it also needs to be well-researched.

Our final recommendation is that the government support community research projects like this one in other communities and continue to support research in the Kingston area. In Kingston, we specifically want to engage in another stage of research that centres the

voices of youth and works to foster youth leadership on this topic. As well, we need to research which specific programs can be used by well-positioned organizations to prevent youth sexual violence. Finally—and I really don’t want to lose this point, because this was just a youth sexual violence prevention assessment—prevention also needs to prioritize sexual violence with adults. That’s not just on campuses; that is once you leave institutions. We need further community-based research to begin to tackle this large project.

0910

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: With the remainder of our time, we want to quickly chat about how we came to these conclusions and recommendations, and afterwards we welcome any questions on any aspect of the project.

This research project was guided by the following questions:

(1) What do we mean by prevention of sexual violence among youth? We answered that mostly through research and looking at literature, as well as what other communities do.

(2) What are current prevention efforts in Kingston and area?

(3) What is the greater Kingston area missing with respect to youth sexual violence prevention?

(4) If there are service gaps, why do these gaps exist?

(5) How can stakeholders work together to address current service gaps?

Our key findings are:

Successful prevention efforts should seek to improve knowledge—such as conversations about what sexual violence is, as well as debunking rape myths etc.—and develop positive skills. We recommend doing this through harm-reduction and bystander-education programs. These need to be about two key components which are involved in any successful prevention program: dealing directly with sexual violence and also dealing with healthy relationships.

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: We also want to emphasize that prevention needs to be community-based and cannot rely on a single event or program, but requires combining multiple prevention efforts and interventions at all stages, with as many people as possible.

Stakeholders identified areas and particular youth that need more focused attention. These youth are often left out of the conversation or not adequately considered when we think about prevention. These include youth under the age of 12—many stakeholders identified that sexual violence is happening younger and younger; youth with various types of disabilities—stakeholders were very clear about highlighting intellectual disabilities specifically; boys; gender non-conforming youth; youth who are home-insecure, and by that I mean two things: youth who are either homeless or facing other invisible forms of homelessness like couch-surfing, as well as youth who feel like they can’t go back to their home, even though perhaps it’s still the ideal white picket fence, but they feel, for whatever reason, that it’s an unsafe environment; rural youth; LGBTQ youth; and youth outside the school system. This is quite important, given the

implementation of the new curriculum; they're not going to address youth outside the school system.

There are also two areas that we want to highlight that are not adequately addressed in Kingston:

(1) Alcohol- and drug-facilitated sexual assault. The Kingston police highlighted that this is a pressing issue in Kingston, and we also noticed that stakeholders really need to know more about what constitutes alcohol- and drug-facilitated sexual assault. This is a really important point that we want to triple underline. If you guys are following along, I would encourage you to triple underline or highlight it, whatever you want to do.

(2) The impact of social media and new technology on sexual assault.

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: Prevention is occurring in Kingston, but it's often reactive or off the side of the desk and without sustainable funding or the proper community engagement.

The existing prevention efforts are not enough. There are particular gaps that we noted, so this is what is not occurring in Kingston:

We do not have enough primary prevention, secondary prevention or direct engagement with topics of sexual violence. That means that when we're talking about prevention, it can be very holistic and looking at healthy relationships or mental health or communication skills, but there's a lack of directly talking about what constitutes sexual violence.

There's not enough training for parents and caregivers about what prevention is and how to engage with their youths, how to be involved. That was really noted by stakeholders as one of the things that's missing.

Awareness of youth is often left out of the conversation, which we highlighted before, and better programming for these youth.

We're missing bystander education.

And we have insufficient engagement from men in the prevention effort, which can be a problem when we're trying to engage boys specifically in taking responsibility in terms of prevention of sexual violence specifically towards girls or female-identified people.

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: As one stakeholder noted, "We are not afraid of the issue; we just don't have the staffing to do it." Funding is a key barrier exacerbating these gaps.

We also identified several other barriers that we talk about more in the report. Organizations identified that some are working in silos so there's not a lot of coordination or community oversight, which leads to these gaps in a lot of ways.

There's difficulties accessing those youth, and once you access those youth, organizations identified the difficulty of ensuring that youth buy into the prevention efforts. Youth workers are not understanding what is sexual violence: There was a lot of confusion about the legal definition, about drug- and alcohol-facilitated sexual assault, which ultimately impacts the way youth buy in as well. You can imagine, if you're a youth getting a prevention thing, and your facilitator doesn't under-

stand sexual assault or what your daily reality is, you're not going to engage the way that you need to.

Prevention is also not in most organizational mandates or in individual worker job descriptions, so it's going to happen off the side of their desk, even though people are passionate about ending sexual violence.

There's not enough adequate training for prevention facilitators and youth workers, especially around structural inequality. By that I mean looking at poverty, sexism, racism, colonialism and other sort of big-factor issues that impact people's experiences of sexual assault—and as well, cultural understandings of sexuality and relationships. By that we don't mean that sexual violence is cultural or that it is culturally defined, in the sense that certain cultures have sexual violence defined differently. Rather, facilitators require cultural awareness to get the message across, and when they don't have that cultural awareness, it undermines prevention efforts.

The recommendations that we highlighted above are really meant to begin to address some of these barriers along with the gaps in prevention efforts in Kingston.

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: We kept the presentation short and left it open for questions. We really appreciate everyone taking the time to hear us, and we look forward to seeing what the government is going to do to really address this issue. Thank you again for having us, and we're open for questions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, ladies, for your very comprehensive and interesting report. Our first questions for you are from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here today and for making the presentation. Just for clarification on a couple of things first: KFACC—you mentioned that acronym. What does KFACC stand for?

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: The Kingston Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Committee. Someone will be here talking about them later on. All they did was, they put out a call for proposals in terms of a project, and we did a project proposal and were hired on the basis of that project proposal.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay. So your report will be online in a week or so. You mentioned a number of focus groups and community-based organizations—if you could give us a little sketch of what groups they might have been. Would the Kingston police be in there, the children's aid society?

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: The back of the report, actually, lists absolutely every single organization we engaged, which is a lot. It included people from justice, so the Kingston police. It also included anti-violence organizations like the sexual assault centre and Kingston Interval House, which is a domestic violence shelter. It included youth-serving agencies that may not necessarily fall under the branch of prevention, so those who deal with youth with disabilities, those who deal with youth outside the school system, youth diversion as well as those who deal with homeless youth. It was, I would say, quite comprehensive.

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: Yes, there were a lot of health centres. People were engaging schools. We had vice-principals, people who work within the Limestone school board who deal with human rights, school counsellors.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I don't have a lot of time, but I'll get one more question in here if I can. We've heard this—and you mentioned it—from a number of people making presentations to this committee, about what constitutes sexual assault and sexual violence and the confusion over the definitions of the various terms. Have you looked at that in any more depth and seen any more appropriate definitions or language or legal language in that regard?

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: Our report has a good definition.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay.

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: We didn't really engage in that discussion because it was sort of outside the scope of this report, but we do have a definition in the report that I think is a good definition that both allows for the legal definition to fall under that but also really goes beyond it. I'll be frank: The legal definition doesn't actually capture everything. It's probably not perfect, as I imagine most of the report is.

0920

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: I think a main point there too is when people misunderstand sexual violence, especially with drug- or alcohol-facilitated sexual violence: If someone's passed out, does that mean you can engage in sexual activity with them? No. So there are misunderstandings with how we understand it, both how a lot of youth misunderstand it—we were hearing time and time again from stakeholders that youth weren't understanding what consent even meant. Also, people facilitating are also not understanding what sexual violence is, so there's a hesitancy for them to engage with youth. That's really what we were stressing, that there needs to be much more training of the trainers. Because there are people willing to engage in this issue; they just don't have the knowledge or skills to be able to do it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, and congratulations on the research. I was a researcher before I was elected, so I'm really looking forward to reading the report.

Following up on your final comment: You flagged the issue of alcohol- and drug-facilitated sexual assault. That actually is not a term that has been used frequently in presentations to this committee. You clarified somewhat in your response to MPP Hillier, about a woman who's passed out, but can you give us a little bit more detail about this issue of drug- and alcohol-facilitated sexual assault?

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: If someone can't give their free and informed consent, meaning, if they're inebriated—and what really needs to be clear is that when we talk about alcohol- and drug-facilitated assault, we think of someone dropping in a pill. That happens, but

what mostly happens is that it's through alcohol that you readily consume yourself. It's not someone forcing you to drink; it's that victims will be consuming alcohol and then they are past the point where they can give their free and enthusiastic consent. That's what constitutes sexual violence in that area. So there's a misunderstanding with that aspect. We still think of drug-facilitated sexual assault as the dropping of a pill, which is much, much less likely than the other forms. We really need to talk about how those two are connected.

At the same point, it's not a victim's fault by consuming alcohol, and we need to really change that conversation as well. There's a lot of victim blaming that we do: "If you drank too much, then it's your fault." That's not what we're saying at all. We need to be able to talk about how people actually give consent and what it means to give consent within drugs and alcohol.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP Kiwala.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you so much to the two of you for being here and for your really comprehensive report and your work in our community. I know that this work is going to extend well beyond what we're doing here today in this committee and have lasting effects, so please accept my acknowledgment for that. I'm truly appreciative. I'm very much looking forward to reading the report and some of the details that you have uncovered.

One of the things that I would like to talk to you about is how you think we can, as a community, seed generational change. As you've noted, many of the organizations that we have here in Kingston do a good job, but we are working in a silo, and the possibility of integrating and collaborating is really important to me and important to our community. So I'm just wondering if there are other ways that you think that we can seed that generational change and prevent behaviour before it happens, whether it's social media or working with really young kids. If you could elaborate on that just a little bit.

Ms. Bailey Gerrits: I want to be really clear: There are a lot of things that need to happen to seed generational change, so it's not one issue.

A few that I would highlight—and in some ways we're remiss for not doing this: engaging youth, to sort of foster that youth leadership at the beginning. Y2K is a great organization that doesn't actually deal with sexual violence in Kingston, but they've identified that they would like to. But facilitators need the training to start having those conversations. I think that would be one way to start fostering youth leadership, and I think that would be quite important, because youth know what they need, they know what's going to impact them. If we do a social media campaign, we—I'm still young, but I don't understand their language at this particular point in my life. They know what's going to impact them, so engaging that youth leadership is quite important.

I also would say focusing on primary prevention is quite key. We don't need to live with violence. That's what I'm operating under. If we start living with that we just need to manage violence—i.e., focusing on justice or

even secondary prevention—I think we're doing ourselves a disservice and undervaluing and not giving ourselves the full potential. I think we need to start shifting the conversation of ending sexual violence, not managing it or ensuring that it has less impact. So that means primary prevention strategies are really quite key. They're not going to change the world overnight, but if we don't start doing it now, when are we going to start doing it?

Ms. Rebecca Rappeport: Just to speak on that, I think every community has certain strengths and there are certain coalitions that build, so it really needs to be community-based. But if there isn't funding for someone to actually be coordinating and to provide training for people within organizations so that they can actually incorporate it, it's not going to happen. So there needs to be funding for either an organization or oversight committee to hire someone to do further research in community, engaging that youth voice, figuring out which programs are good for which youth—because it's not just one program, right? There's no golden ticket.

There needs to be funding for that role, I would hope, in every community, who can then provide that coordination, provide that training and start working with people who do engage with youth to be able to incorporate prevention in a lot of different ways. There's not just one person. The sexual assault centre cannot be the only centre that engages in this. Organizations need to take responsibility, but we need funding to be able to help them do that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Rebecca and Bailey, I want to thank you both very much for coming and presenting to our committee this morning. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now.

REGISTERED NURSES'
ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO,
KINGSTON CHAPTER

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter this morning: the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, Kingston chapter. Good morning. Please have a seat and make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you like. You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee and then they will ask you some questions. Please begin, for the record, by stating your name and your organization. Start any time.

Ms. Denise Wood: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. My name is Denise Wood. I'm a registered nurse in Ontario, having practised for 45 years in many capacities: as an educator, administrator and in acute and emergency care. I have witnessed first-hand the outcomes of patients who have experienced different levels of sexual assault. I have also witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace. Currently, I am the region 9 representative on the board of directors for RNAO and also the treasurer of the Kingston chapter of RNAO. Region 9 includes Kingston and area, Lanark Leeds and Grenville, Champlain and Seaway chapters.

The Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario is a professional association representing registered nurses, nurse practitioners and nursing students who practise in all roles and sectors in Ontario. Our mandate is to advocate for healthy public policy and the nursing role in enhancing the health of Ontarians. Since 1925, RNAO has advocated for healthy public policy, promoted excellence in nursing practice and influenced decisions that affect nurses and the public they serve.

I appreciate this opportunity to appear before the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment as you look for ways to both prevent and improve our response to Ontarians who have experienced sexual violence and harassment. I also look forward to listening to the presentations of the many dedicated professionals from organizations across the region who work so diligently to support victims of sexual violence on a daily basis.

The chapter executive of Kingston has reviewed the April 29 submission from RNAO to this committee and agrees wholeheartedly with the recommendations contained within the document, which include, but are not limited, to the following:

RNAO urges the governments of Ontario and Canada:
—to respect, support and fund aboriginal communities and organizations in implementation of the Aboriginal Sexual Violence Action Plan;

—to update and strengthen Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy with a detailed implementation plan, complete with targets and timelines, accompanied by substantive public investment; and

—to provide protected, sustained funding so that hospital-based sexual and domestic violence treatment centres have the staffing and other resources to provide 24/7 care that is excellent, appropriate and timely and consistent with best international practices and standards of care.

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Implementation and ongoing revision of the 2015 health and physical education curriculum is critical to enable systemic, generational change.

RNAO supports investment in a creative engagement fund to provoke discussion of challenging issues, such as rape culture, consent, gender inequality and social norms through funding projects by Ontario artists.

As part of a larger initiative to transform rape culture, particular attention should be given to improve how the media report on sexual assault through such resources as Reporting on Sexual Assault: A Toolkit for Canadian Media.

Although the Occupational Health and Safety Act does include wording prohibiting reprisal by an employer, explicit and strong language to protect whistleblowers concerning incidents or potential incidents of violence and harassment and other threats to the health of the public would strengthen our health care system.

The Ministry of Labour should review the Occupational Health and Safety Act to include safety from

emotional or psychological harm rather than merely physical harm, as part of the mandate of the ministry.

As part of strengthening health outcomes, quality of health care services, inter-professional care and addressing power imbalances, RNAO advocates amending the public health act to replace medical advisory committees with inter-professional advisory committees.

As the Kingston chapter of RNAO, our mandate is to offer registered nurses, nurse practitioners and nursing students a variety of educational, in-service workshops. These initiatives are geared to enhancing and improving care to patients and clients.

The Kingston chapter has been recently active since July 2014. One of our main objectives is to be open and transparent with nurses and other professionals. The chapter would be very interested in collaborating with agencies such as the sexual assault centre, Kingston police and others to develop and deliver education on sexual violence and sexual harassment to our members.

Sexual violence can and does happen to anyone: people of all ages, genders, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation and nationality. Some of the most vulnerable in our communities are girls between the ages of six and 18. According to statistics available from Girls Inc. of Limestone, Algonquin and Lakeshore, 6,250 girls in their service area are likely to experience sexual abuse in their lifetime. And 80% of sexual abuse occurs in the home, 69% of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim, and only 10% of sexual assaults are reported to police.

In addition, 43% of teens 15 to 17 years of age say they were asked by someone on the Internet to meet in person, and one in five accepted. Eighty per cent of youth are connected to the Internet; 72% visit chat rooms, and many visit adult chat rooms or private rooms.

All people need to be provided with skills and strategies to protect themselves and be empowered to make change.

On behalf of Ontario's nurses, nurse practitioners and nursing students, I thank you once again for the opportunity to appear before this committee. We'll be delighted to respond to any questions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for coming to present to the committee today. The previous presenter talked about the KFACC body. You mentioned your chapter's interest in participating in the implementation of public education efforts. Are you already involved with the KFACC—

Ms. Denise Wood: No, actually. I'm sorry to say that I really had not heard of the study. I'm really pleased to have met the girls before and would really like to read their report. She mentioned silos—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Silos, yes.

Ms. Denise Wood: I don't think the right hand sometimes knows what the left hand is doing. For instance, the Girls Inc. statistics that I quoted—I was very impressed. You're familiar with Girls Inc.?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: No, I'm not.

Ms. Denise Wood: It's an organization—actually, it came from the States. They focus on empowering girls and giving them education on all sorts of things, including how to invest their money, physical activity and self-defence. One of the programs is When a Girl Says No—and a program called Be Bold to talk to girls from six to eight about what's sexually appropriate and what isn't. They are only funded by donations—and I think in Kingston and Leeds-Grenville, by the United Way. To me, it is such a grassroots place to start to educate girls. I was really impressed, but I didn't know all they did.

So I think that's one of our challenges: to be available and to have some forum, perhaps, to discuss together what we can do as a group, together, rather than trying to do everything by ourselves.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, for sure. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Kiwala.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Hi, Denise. Thank you so much for coming to the committee hearing today. I really appreciate what you've brought forward to the committee.

One thing for me that comes through from your presentation is the absolute, imperative need to collaborate. You've identified a number of very interesting topics such as the tool kit for sexual assault for media, and certainly the way that media presents cases of sexual assault is extremely important. You also mentioned some of the labour aspects of sexual assault and the Girls Inc. study and statistics that they have uncovered, which are, quite frankly, horrifying.

One of the things that I'm wondering about—if you could elaborate a little bit on it—is some of the physical and mental health impacts of sexual assault and harassment on survivors. As an organization, what is the RNAO doing in an academic setting to deal with that? And what can you suggest for the province that we should be looking at and focusing on with respect to that?

Ms. Denise Wood: Thank you, Sophie. I'll try to answer all your questions as best I can.

I believe, having worked, as I said, for 45 years—as they say, I've been around the block. I worked in emergency for almost 15 years. It sticks in your mind, because we get repeat visitors. There are frequent flyers to emergency rooms. Sometimes we've seen families who bring children at the age of five or six in, and we see them over and over again as they become adults. And at this point in time, they're addicted to drugs because of what has happened to them as children. So I think prevention, as the previous speakers—and arming young people, boys and girls, and young men and young women, with the tools to know when they're in trouble and when to get help, and where to go for it. Sometimes it takes an organization such as Girls Inc., because they can't get that support at home.

So we need to make it easier for young people, as far as I'm concerned, to reach out and get the help they need. Sometimes you have to get parental support to get help—and that really defeats the purpose. If you can't tell your

own family what's going on and you can't get help from someone else because you need their permission, then we're in trouble.

I think in terms of the academic—the Legislature, every year, sees RNAO at RNAO day. Most people come for breakfast. We try to influence policy and we try to influence the curriculum in our schools, not only for nurses, but also how our doctors are trained. So I think that we have to continue to do that, and to use our best-practice guidelines, which are several and are listed in the complete written report of RNAO. I would look them up, but we do have guidelines. We have evidence-based, research-based guidelines that can be used in our educational and academic institutions.

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Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from MPP McDonnell.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: Thank you for coming out this morning. I know that 45 years is a long career.

Your territory is really from basically eastern Ontario—

Ms. Denise Wood: Up to Pembroke.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: Up to Pembroke. Okay.

Ms. Denise Wood: From west of Kingston to all of Leeds and Grenville, Smiths Falls and that area up to Pembroke.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: Okay. You talked about, obviously, a lot of experience in the workplace. Is sexual harassment a problem in the hospital workplace?

Ms. Denise Wood: I would say that it is. I would also say that we had hoped through the years that things would get better. Some stereotypical depiction of nurses still continues. The RNAO in 2009 lobbied several agencies about how nurses were depicted as the “naughty nurse,” and there were several commercials that were pulled because of that. I do believe that it's better, but I still think that nurses—and not just female nurses, but male nurses are also subject to harassment in the workplace and bullying.

I think the key is education and us continuing to lobby. The work that has been done in terms of Bill 108 has helped in terms of people being able to report sexual harassment, so I applaud that initiative.

But yes, unfortunately, I think there still is.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: So is the current whistle-blowing protection enough? Do there need to be changes made to it?

Ms. Denise Wood: I don't have the statistics on how many people have come forward, but I would hope that the anonymity of it remains and people aren't singled out for doing that. But I think we can always look at improving systems such as that.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: I have one other question. You talked about seeing frequent flyers. In the current system, is it appropriate that, as you witness some of these things, you're able to report them or take action to deflect it or stop it at that point? Or is it something where there's a reservation in getting involved?

Ms. Denise Wood: We have to; under the legislation, any child abuse or potential abuse has to be reported. But once a child becomes an adolescent, it makes it more difficult, because they have their own consent. So it's more difficult as they become older.

Having worked in emergency, I've seen some awful things in terms of sexual abuse. We have to stop victimizing the victims. I don't want to be graphic, but one of the most horrific scenes is to see a woman having to go through a rape assessment. With staffing issues, it doesn't always make it possible, but we always have someone there just to hold that person's hand and support them, because it's the most horrific thing you could ever imagine.

That's another whole topic, nursing staffing. We need those kinds of professionals to be there, and with 24/7 availability so people don't have to wait.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Scott has a question for you.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you. I actually just wanted to enlighten you. Yesterday, when we were in the Kitchener-Waterloo region—there are two hospitals there, and they have a social worker on call who comes in, then they have a separate unit of the two hospitals, St. Mary's and—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Grand River Hospital.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —Grand River; thank you, Chair—who are there with the victims.

Ms. Denise Wood: That's wonderful.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just wanted to share that because, as we're hearing through the committee travel, some great best practice, some great ideas, and if we can share them somehow, formally, later—

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I have it here. They sent their full scope of budgets and everything out there, and I'm going to send it to—

Ms. Laurie Scott: We should share that with RNAO—

Ms. Denise Wood: Absolutely.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —because we're hearing that.

I nursed for 20 years before I entered the political field—so I hear your stories, and we have to do a much better job.

Thank you for coming to the committee today and sharing the stories of this region and your past experience. We're all collectively trying to do better.

Ms. Denise Wood: I know you are, and we appreciate the efforts of the committee, for sure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Wood, we appreciate your presentation this morning here to this committee. We invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

MR. MATTHEW GVENTER

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter to come forward: Matthew Gventer. Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: My name is Matthew Gventer. I'm an ordinary citizen, retired from the Prison for Women.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin any time.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: Okay. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. I didn't think I had much to say, but it turns out I have a fairly long presentation, which I'll try to shorten.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You will have up to 20 minutes to speak to our committee, and then they will follow up with some questions for you.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: I just want to say that my credentials on this document—it was given to me by the women at the Prison for Women when I retired, telling me that they appreciated the work we did together.

Much of what I'm about to relate to you is impressionistic based on personal experiences. I'm sure there will be much more valuable information and ideas presented by other people who have facts and figures to back up what they're saying.

I'm also responding to a suggestion that it would be worthwhile for a man who has worked to defend women's rights over the years to be present.

As a point, my wife is—not to take advantage of this—chair of the Kingston Interval House board in Kingston, and I often feel that I am her secretary and recognized as such.

This account is based on 15 years of working at the Prison for Women, plus 10 years before that in male institutions, and also on my years of municipal activism, advocating for affordable housing and for people's access to services.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): May we ask what your role was at the prison?

Mr. Matthew Gventer: I was head of social development, and then I managed the school and the work programs for a number of years.

Fundamentally, I want to say that the committee should accept that women should not be treated the same as men, with the understanding that the difference should be in favour of women. I want to demonstrate what I mean. There were many incidents at the Prison for Women that have burned in my mind, but this is one of them. There was a woman who was appearing before the parole board appealing for humanitarian release—early release. In the situation I am relating, the woman was from a Latin American country. The care system for her children had broken down, and they were on the street or at risk to end up there. When she left the parole hearing—I can hear and see this now—she screamed and she fell to the ground in a faint. Her friends from the Hispanic cultural group rushed to her assistance, and one said to me that she had been turned down. I've been in a number of situations where people received results from parole hearings, but I had never seen anybody have such an extreme outcome. For her, the children were so central to her life that it was beyond her capacity to deal with the consequences.

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It is valid to say that most women serving federal penal sentences are guilty of significant crimes. Often substance abuse is linked to the offences. Violence is also often part of the crime; however, it is also observable that women who were committed to the Prison for Women were commonly victims of violence themselves. Many suffered sexual assault and often sexual abuse as children. As with men, poverty was also often part of their life experiences. For many women who committed violent acts against their spouses, it was a last resort after years of abuse.

Some had turned to prostitution, and that should not be surprising for women who were dealing with lack of opportunity, self-doubt or even self-hate, low educational achievement and a history of abuse. This is not meant to speak ill of women who turn to selling sexual favours. It's not to say that all women who do so suffer these conditions, but that is a reality for many women who are in sexual trades. For many, choices are few.

A major task that we had in the Prison for Women was to help people gain a vision and an identity that was more positive, that permitted pro-social achievements in life.

I'm going to talk about the need for recognition of the differences between men and women. There are much fewer women sentenced to federal sentences than men. There is a much lower level of violence amongst women than men in the community. What is the consequence of that? There are much fewer women in jail, so the sizes of the prisons are smaller, the availability of services and training opportunities are fewer. Could we do anything to ameliorate that? Yes, we could make it easier for women to have temporary absences into the community or work programs in the community where they could receive training. I'll try and read this because I have to phrase this carefully: Our federal laws are equivalent for men and for women. As the federal regulations become more restrictive, the result is more damaging for women than men.

It's also my experience that informal interaction during escorted temporary absences provides one of the best opportunities to help people envision a place for themselves in the community. On one such pass, the destination event was delayed. I walked with a woman in a nearby park. We got into a useful discussion about her situation, her children, what she wanted, and her fears about getting back into the community and being able to function. Afterwards, she told me that was a very valuable opportunity. It helped to develop focus; it helped her prepare for release. Those informal opportunities are important and yet that kind of a practice, as the rules stiffened, would have brought severe sanctions against me. That's an example of how the reduction of discretion can reduce effectiveness.

I should mention that much was done at the Prison for Women that was creative and that should be kept in mind for future services for women. For example, a very common problem amongst women in prison is borderline personality disorder, and the Prison for Women had inte-

grated an effective program for dealing with people with borderline personality disorders. As you know, the problem in prisons for women is the amount of self-injury and self-hate that is expressed. This is very common amongst women suffering from borderline personality disorders. So this is an effective program to reduce the amount of self-injury that occurs. Also, the strong programs that were being developed in recognition of the special needs of aboriginal women were an important adjunct improvement to the lives of women and dealing with the challenges. So I think the healing lodge programs merit attention for application at the provincial level.

I want to talk about harassment for a minute. I think it's important that harassment programs provide an opportunity for people not only to deal with harassment but to make sure that they don't suffer retaliation. I want to describe one incident. I was in charge of a work assignment, and a woman arrived in my office, quite upset, because she had leaned over to pick up something and a male staff member had made an inappropriate comment. She asked to be moved. I made sure that she found new employment, and I had her fill out a complaint form. This woman had been involved in an anger-management program. She was walking down a corridor and I was walking behind her—she didn't know I was behind her—and I heard her say, "Matthew had me fill out a complaint form, and it helped me put in practice the things we were learning in anger management." I was not totally happy with the outcome in terms of what management did about that situation—I would have liked to have seen stronger action taken—but I do want to report that as far as I know, she received no negative consequence from making that complaint. It was effective for her to become empowered and to apply her skills and to be affirmed.

Another incident that is burned in my mind has to do with sexual violence and our response to it. I want to describe an incident that is relevant. Quite a bit of time has passed since this event. It's my impression that much progress has been made in providing resources for recognizing the legitimacy of women's accusations of sexual violence. There are trained staff and facilities at hospitals for victims of sexual assault. There's pressure on the police to be proactive. Despite the progress, the multitude of aboriginal women who have disappeared suggests much more needs to be done. I have a sense that an underlying issue is the stereotyping that occurs. Seeing some women as members of the underclass leads to the faulty rationalization that they are responsible for their own victimization. At the Prison for Women, an aboriginal woman was released on temporary absence. She violated the conditions by drinking and by going to a drinking establishment. In that circumstance, she was sexually attacked and was brought back to the Prison for Women in a terribly traumatized state. We called the police, and they treated the situation in a very offhanded manner. How many of us can say we never showed error of judgment? She deserved as thorough protection of the law as anyone.

Discussing the Prison for Women without talking about the rash of suicides shortly before it closed would be a flaw. If ever there was a case for women's special needs to be recognized, it is the suicides at the Prison for Women. Most people would contend that the strip searching investigated by Madam Justice Arbour was more important.

Certainly, the treatment of women by peace officers should be considered by this committee. The existence of women's emergency response teams would be a step forward. In general, police restraint is a social issue before the public now.

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My wife and I were appalled when we saw a very disturbed woman, probably under the influence, arrested in Kingston several years ago. The woman had wrecked some outdoor sales facilities and threatened people. While being arrested, she spit on the arresting officer. As he shoved her into the cruiser, he went out of his way to bang her head on the cruiser door and kick her legs to make her move over.

The series of suicides at the Prison for Women were indicative of the underlying issues of violence women face in society. The women were mainly aboriginal women. They were linked to a combination of substance dependencies, past experiences of violence and the reliving of them, the loss of community supports through the relocation of women far from their homes and maladaptive social relations inside the prison.

This leads me to the latter part of my presentation. It is my opinion that society has much to do to prevent women from ending up in prison. First and foremost is for the preconditions to be reduced: poverty, disorganized family situations, childhood sexual abuse etc.

It is important for women to be able to leave abusive situations. VAW shelters are only a first step. Women often have an ambivalent reality of wanting to leave and desiring to stay. An image is burned in my mind of a woman at the Prison for Women pacing in front of a barrier waiting for her father to arrive from a distant province. I knew that over the years she had faced abandonment. Her father never arrived, and one could almost touch the sense of rejection and betrayal she felt. Relationships are paramount for many women.

However, weighing on the decision to break off from a relationship or not is a socio-economic reality, not the least of these is the availability of accommodation. In Kingston, we have experienced a growing dearth of adequate affordable low-income accommodation. Of course, the failure of the federal government to maintain a meaningful housing program is a major factor in the worsening situation. On the other hand, the province has some responsibility for the deteriorating situation.

For example, the definition of affordability in the provincial policy statement on municipal planning is out of step with the trends of North America. Bottom line: Without getting into the various formulations of the definition, affordability is at the 60th percentile level of household incomes, and 25% of accommodations in new

developments must be affordable to households at that income level. In Kingston, that would be over \$80,000. The city claims it wants to spread out low-income units so there is no ghettoization. This is not happening in new divisions because of the definition in the official plan.

The new North American model is inclusionary zoning: working with developers to incentivize a range of housing options serving the whole population. It is also important to finance non-profit and co-operative housing organizations to build long-term affordable units. We need to increase the vacancy rate in Kingston above the 1.3 vacancy rate for the market forces to kick in. The availability of affordable housing options is a major component in helping women see a way out of hostile family situations or situations at risk.

The basic income proposal also would provide a needed brick in the steps to independence for women and children living at risk. Women need financial security to make the break. I don't think much more needs to be said about that. It is self-evident. There are many people who have studied this option and are advocating for it who would be better able to demonstrate its advantages.

Good universal daycare would contribute to enabling women to leave unsatisfactory living situations. In my opinion, full-time kindergarten was an important step in that direction. There are many other such programmatic changes that could be mentioned, but the point is clear: Women need breathing space to make the break. Making the break would break the cycle of violence for many people.

There are other factors than economic that contribute to the cycle of violence. Sexualized images of women in advertising and video games is an example. Certainly, women often take pleasure in their femininity, which is not something to criticize. However, we have images in advertising and video games showing the juxtaposition of sexualized women and beer consumption and partying and speeding automobiles, creating the connection between power and sexuality. Where this gets most detrimental is in the implication of male dominance.

For a time, this pattern had been more subdued. In recent years, with global corporatization, such as with certain beer companies and liquor companies, this pattern has re-emerged.

On the other hand, there are many examples of women being portrayed as playing a leadership role such as at the boardroom table.

It is not that progress has been totally stifled. I fear that the bifurcated direction of the culture is addressing two divergent cohorts. The men who savour their historical advantaged position may be drawn to the more traditional stereotypical portrayal of the ideal woman as housebound, subservient and catering to men, and overly sexualized.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Gventer, you have one minute remaining.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: Right.

I don't know what to do about this other than to note corporate irresponsibility and the objective to sanction them toward a more constructive image of women.

Finally, I wish to emphasize the other bidirectional changes in women's experiences. Certainly, many women are increasingly empowered. More women than men are achieving academically. Some women are beginning to move into managerial and boardroom positions. On the other hand, many women continue to be exploited. They often predominate in low-paying service jobs. A woman trying to manage on a lower income has the challenge of both caring for family and working worsened by her poverty. The difficulty in organizing for collective bargaining in these lower-end jobs disadvantages women especially. And we still have the lower-income households over-represented by single-income families. These are issues this committee should address because they create a condition for women breaking out of the cycle and not being exposed to the risk of violence.

In the long run, economic equality and political empowerment and a fair opportunity structure will give women the means to protect themselves from violence and harassment. My experience, having been led by women managers, is that they are able to change the world.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: I'm going to give my question to MPP Kiwala.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. I'm sorry.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you very much for being here today. You started your testimony by saying that you are an ordinary citizen, and I would have to disagree with you there; you're anything but. You've been a marvelous advocate for women's rights for many, many years, so I thank you for that.

I'm wondering if you could give between one and three suggestions to the province on where you feel money would be best allocated to help women in terms of self-injury and self-harm and hatred towards themselves. What should we be doing there? As you know, funds are limited, and I know you know that because of the programs that you developed at Prison for Women. In one case in particular that I know of, you developed a program without any funding at all. So I know that you're good at out-of-the-box thinking, and I'd really appreciate any suggestions that you have in that regard.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: Sophie, I never did well in competitions because I can't think on my feet very well. I'd have to think about it.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: We'll talk about this after.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: Yes. I think it is important to prioritize, and I think there are key steps that can be taken. For me, right now, in my current life activities, trying to break the cycle of poverty is the most important step, but it's a large-budget item.

I mentioned inclusionary housing, and I went off the topic a bit. Inclusionary zoning does not take much money; it takes an expectation of working together, of involving the private sector and the public sector working together to address problems. Instead of money, I think we have to think about common effort.

That's the first step I would take. I don't know if that's helpful.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: It is.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you, Matthew, for your presentation. I'd like to focus in on your time at Prison for Women. You said that you were head of the social department and involved in work and school assignments and training.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: Yes. I should have also mentioned self-help and the offender program sections.

Mr. Randy Hillier: You mentioned in your presentation about helping women gain vision and improve a positive identity. We know, from what we've heard—a big component here is the power imbalance and how a lack of positive identity plays into that.

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We've also heard from many groups about the lack of coordination between various groups. I'm just wondering, in your experience and in your time with the federal institution, was there a sharing of your insights and your programs with other provincial institutions or with other local community groups, like KFACC or any of the multitude of groups that we have—in your own objective evaluation—on how effective your training in social programs was with others?

Mr. Matthew Gventer: I was working within the prison. I was a middle-level manager within the prison. My focus was within the prison. I worked quite extensively with the volunteer sector in the city to bring resources into the prison. I had a sense of a lack of continuity once people were released. That was a major problem: that people left prison, generally, with inadequate resources. There were other people working more extensively—

Mr. Randy Hillier: There wouldn't be any follow-up to see how effective that programming would have been—unless it failed, I guess, and that individual came back into the prison system.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: They had begun to develop a measuring methodology, and, as I was going to say—and I accept your intervention—there were other people more involved with coordinating with the community. And of course, people who were released from prison were followed by parole officers who worked in the community to create the continuity. So I wouldn't want to say there wasn't—but certainly there was the problem of lack of resources for people being released.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Would you say that there would be a greater benefit if there was a greater sharing of the experiences in those programs with other—we often hear from groups involved about programs, but we don't actually understand what the program entails, the nuts and bolts of it.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: Not only was that a problem outside, but it was a problem inside, in that we taught people effective communication skills, problem-solving skills and various anger-management skills, and we tried

to get them to use certain methods to deal with situations—but to the extent that the prison situation was stratified and a caste system, to the extent that people were not necessarily encouraged by the correctional staff to use those skills, there was lack of continuity inside. That, obviously, might be more of a problem outside—that the reinforcement of the skills would be difficult. On the other hand, it's a much more natural environment outside. They could practise the skills outside.

I agree with you that the reinforcement of the skills was an important component that should have been in place.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final questions for you are from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for your evident compassion in serving incarcerated women.

One of the things that we've heard about at this committee over and over again is the long-term impact of violence on a woman and her ability to heal. You mentioned that a lot of the women who were in Prison for Women were survivors of sexual assault or had experienced childhood sexual abuse. In your opinion, were there specialized services in place to help women heal from these very profound traumas that they had experienced with sexual violence?

Mr. Matthew Gventer: That is a difficult question to answer, because Prison for Women went through two or three cycles of trying to address that. At one point, there was a large number of psychological staff—three or four, plus case managers—working on that issue.

It gets into the question of whether there was reinforcement of self-indulgence or—I have to be careful how I put this; I'm talking off the top of my head here—pressure. It led to a move to more of a social skills development model, helping people overcome the consequences by having more capacity to think positively, to problem-solve, to plan for employment, to do life planning and so on.

There were different points of view, so for me to say to what extent there were available services is difficult. The need was great, the suffering was great and it was not always effective in either case.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Mr. Han Dong: Chair, if I can just ask one more question? I just have a very short one, if it's okay with the committee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We are way ahead of schedule, so yes, I'll permit that.

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you, Chair. Matthew, I have a quick question. Something caught my attention when you mentioned the effects of media and advertising. As you know, this committee is looking for some root causes of sexual violence. In your mind, what would you like to see changed? Whether it's government regulation, whether it's an educational campaign on the media and advertising—that aspect of it.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: I am not doing very well here. I laboured over that question in my preparation, try-

ing to think of what the answer is. It is difficult, because we want freedom of the press, freedom of media and communication. Governments have limited power to intervene.

I think that the advertising is very destructive. How do you create a normative condition in the advertising community with the recognition that profit-making for the sake of profit is destructive? That is a difficult question.

I talked about sanctions. Sanctions can be positive or negative. One can use rewards, one can use encouragement, one can use education. One can encourage public campaigns to not purchase from companies that engage in such actions, but I don't know how effective that would be.

Mr. Han Dong: With the introduction of the digital world and the new media, do you think the government should expand its scope in reviewing—I won't go as far as rating, but reviewing—the essence of these, or expanding its regulation to cover those areas as well?

Mr. Matthew Gventer: That's an interesting idea. I think publicizing and recognizing the content and making people aware would be helpful. I don't know whether those people who would be most attracted to that kind of advertising, to the violence, would take umbrage with it, but certainly one has to try. I didn't have an answer.

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We thank you so much for coming here, presenting to this committee this morning and sharing your information. We invite you to join the audience now if you wish to.

Mr. Matthew Gventer: Thank you.

KINGSTON POLICE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to now call on our next presenters, from the Kingston Police. Please come forward. Make yourselves comfortable. If you'd like, pour yourselves a glass of water.

You're going to have up to 20 minutes to address our committee this morning, and that will be followed by questions from our committee members. For the record, please start by stating your names, and begin any time.

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Ms. Antje McNeely: I'm Antje McNeely with the Kingston Police. I'm the deputy chief there. I've been there for 30 years.

Mr. Frank Howard: I'm Frank Howard. I am the acting detective sergeant in the sexual assault unit. I have been there 29 years.

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: I'm Melanie Jefferies. I'm a detective with the sexual assault and child abuse unit. I've been there 16 years.

Ms. Antje McNeely: I'll begin. On behalf of the Kingston Police, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to talk to you about our experiences.

Just a brief overview of what we are part of: I'm proud of our collaborative effort that we have within our com-

munity in these areas. The Kingston Police has representation on KFACC, as you've heard, which is a group of about 25 organizations committed to eliminating violence by raising awareness of issues relating to domestic and sexual violence. Again, these agencies provide services for victims of partner abuse or sexual violence, their children, their family members, and agencies that work with perpetrators.

Through KFACC we have developed the partner abuse protocol for the city of Kingston and Frontenac county and the sexual assault protocol for the city of Kingston and Frontenac county. We also have a child abuse protocol for Kingston and Frontenac which details a response to investigations, justice and community services for the city of Kingston and Frontenac county. It involves about 17 community partners.

In addition, the Kingston Police are partners in the threat assessment protocols with our school boards for dealing with high-risk behaviours. It's hoped that these early intervention measures by school boards and community team members will prevent violence in our schools. The strength of the school board/community partnership lies in the multidisciplinary composition of the response team, that being the boards of education, municipalities, police, EMS, family and children's services, health care and other agencies.

Kingston Police have a partnership with the Youth Diversion Program as well, which provides timely and effective alternatives to the judicial process for youth. As an alternative to formally charging a youth, the Youth Diversion Program addresses the Kingston Police requirements to consider community options to the formal court process.

We have a LEAD team protocol, which stands for leadership, education, advocacy and diversion. This is a community-based partnership between our mental health and addictions services, Kingston Police, OPP and our hospitals to work with our most vulnerable persons who are in acute mental health distress.

The Kingston Police also receive funding from the government for a bail safety officer, who works with a member of the Victim/Witness Assistance Program and crown attorney's office to determine risk to victims, to ensure bail brief completeness and to offer early support to victims of domestic violence.

The Kingston Police also dedicate specialized investigators to investigate sexual assaults, an Internet child exploitation unit—which is a provincial strategy—and dedicated resources to proactively investigate human trafficking.

Mr. Frank Howard: Detective Jefferies and I are going to be going back and forth with recommendations that we've polled and canvassed from our unit.

First, I will address the justice system:

—to continue seeking dedicated crown attorneys who specialize in sexual assault investigations and assistance from the provincial government for victims of sexual assault;

—to seek innovative ways to assist vulnerable victims to testify to reduce re-victimization of the court process;

for example, a trauma dog, which Detective Jefferies will likely explain, probably in a question later, because she is the one proposing that initiative;

- specific sensitivity training for judges, crown and defence who deal with victims with an emphasis on professional courtroom decorum; victims' needs should outweigh those of the judiciary, and there needs to be a top-down authority to the judiciary to monitor this;

- the emphasis must be on minimizing the number of times the victim must tell their story throughout the court process; the discovery hearing is an example of this: Does this have an overall negative impact on the victim having to speak in front of their abuser in a process that will likely shorten court time but force them to retell their story in front of their abuser;

- ensure there are enough funded and trained victim advocates to bolster the strained resources of the Victim/Witness Assistance Program, who are now partnering with sexual assault centre staff to try to maintain their advocacy; and

- ensure there is funding available for victims who require independent legal representation for disclosure of third-party records in the court process; this requires the victim to obtain legal counsel if legal aid is denied.

Detective Jefferies.

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: Another area that we had concern: There is a lack of services, a gap, in adolescent sexual offending. This would include offenders between the ages of 12 and 17. We've experienced cases with high schools. One case I had in particular was a 15-year-old who had acted inappropriately toward other girls in his class, including touching the inside of one girl's thigh, grabbing something from inside a girl's shirt. Once those girls came forward, other girls came forward about his sexual behaviour towards them and inappropriate sexual remarks. The school acted appropriately in a suspension, but the families didn't feel comfortable going through the criminal process and didn't want to proceed with criminal charges. So this leaves us in a bit of a position.

As the deputy said, we can refer to Youth Diversion or Pathways, but for a long time they didn't take sexual assault referrals. They've changed that recently, but what we would propose is that there be a specific program for youth who are adolescent sex offenders, a program specific to them, just like in our partner abuse program, that we have a specific program they can be referred to so that during a referral process or during mandatory sentencing, they take part in one of these programs.

The Halton Trauma Centre is proposing a regional protocol for responding to adolescent sex offending. I think we pretty much do that here, short of just this referral that we're trying to get going with a specific program for sex offenders. In their stats, in the Halton proposal, they say that 50% of adults who have committed sexual offences reported that they experienced deviant sexual interests prior to the age of 18. In Canada, 20% of those charged with sexual offences are between the ages of 12 and 17 years, so if we catch these adoles-

cents younger, hopefully we can prevent them from becoming adult offenders.

Mr. Frank Howard: Educating workplaces on sexual violence and harassment to ensure safe working environments: This is more to target small workplaces where it would be unpopular for a victim to report an incident of workplace harassment or sexual assault, and to follow up with protection for the victim. Big companies have many avenues to report this behaviour, and there is the possibility of being moved for the protection of the victim, where small businesses—there is nowhere for them to go.

The hospitality industry or bar settings, where alcohol is being consumed by patrons, and young, inexperienced staff are often subjected to harassment or sexual assault:

- make it a part of the Smart Serve training and warn employees about some of the behaviours they may experience and what they need to report;

- possibly making it a stipulation on receiving a liquor licence to ensure there is a safe work atmosphere, and the possibility of the licence being removed.

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: Another area we discussed in preventing sexual violence is age-appropriate education in schools. I noticed when I was sitting in the audience, the lady representing the nurses was talking about early education as well. We're talking about early education in regard to what a healthy relationship looks like and what consent looks like. We've had a lot of discussions about peer pressure in regard to not taking drugs or not using alcohol. We need that same sort of campaign in regard to consent, what consent is, and not being pressured into sexual activity.

We've seen a lot lately in our unit with young adults, even, and adolescents coming forward, where they've engaged in some kind of sexual activity and not realized that if they started by kissing, they can say no when it moves on to some other activity; or if they send a text that they will engage in sexual activity, that they can withdraw their consent. I think we need to stress to them that consent is only consent until they remove it and to stand up for themselves. I think more confidence—like the nurse was mentioning, Girls Inc., and just self-esteem for adolescents to say no and to know they can say no.

We also propose that our sexual assault unit, for first-year university—that seems to be an issue, their first time away from home, combined with alcohol. We do presentations in regard to healthy relationships, consent, and the definitions of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

We've also discussed, instead of individual protocols for universities, one regional protocol, so that it's consistent in serving victims, and a checklist of the options that are available so that if that victim decides to proceed criminally, she can, and all those options are still available; or she doesn't have to, and she still has the services available to her—so just one regional protocol for all universities and colleges.

Mr. Frank Howard: Police training:

- enhance front-line training for officers to help them deal with the victims of crime, educating them that victims may respond very differently to similar circumstances;

- dispelling myths and stereotypes, since not all officers enter the workplace with the same life experiences;

- understanding that what you do affects whether a victim will report to police in the future;

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- establishing and maintaining positive relationships with our diverse community and becoming familiar with our community resources that are already available; for example, language barriers and counselling resources that may make it easier to report;

- increased and consistent training at the Ontario Police College and at the force level regarding LGBTQ issues; and

- ensure that police agencies have community protocols that include access to updated community resource lists for victim referrals; for example, establishing an updated list of essential services that all officers have access to in case a victim has a certain need. In the past, officers would construct their own list of important contacts and other officers would not be able to access them. We are proposing that the Kingston Police maintain a list that all road officers and detectives have access to.

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: The last thing we wanted to touch on is the sexual assault and domestic violence unit at the hospital. It's been operating here at KGH for 11 years and it was one of the pilot sites. It's been an amazing service for victims and for sensitivity to those victims when they're brought into the hospital. When I first started patrol, they didn't have that unit. You would take a lady into the hospital and it was traumatic for her to sit in emergency. Then they tried to scramble to find a doctor who knew how to do the kit, and they would do the entire kit. So it was just re-traumatization for the victim. Since this program, it's much better. They're whisked off up to a private room. It's a nurse who's trained. They only do the parts of the kit that are applicable to the assault.

Recently, we've had Donna Joyce, who is a manager of that program, retire. There's been some division of her duties to people who have other responsibilities. There's a concern that it's not going to be a focus on that unit.

Also, social services in respect to that unit have been reduced slightly in the hours per week that they provide them. We're just concerned that the funding continues, and if not, it is increased to that unit, because it's a very invaluable service to women who have been sexually abused or through domestic violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Thank you very much. End of presentation?

Our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here today. We've heard this from a number of people about past recommendations or from various police forces about dedicated crowns and crowns with greater training in sensitivity. I'm just wondering how long that recommendation or request has been out there for, and what sort of response are you hearing from the Attorney

General's office at all—or if there's been any response from the Attorney General to that idea.

Ms. Antje McNeely: I'll try to answer that question. It's been around for a while of course. When it becomes provincially mandated, like with domestic violence, that's when you kind of see things happening. We have that Domestic Violence Court; you have the dedicated crowns and so forth. I know within our own local community we work very well with our crown's office and our V/WAP to ensure that sexual assault victims are looked after. It would appear that each municipality would be working the best way that they can in these kinds of areas.

Provincially mandated is sometimes helpful for us when we're working for the justice system, so it has been there for a long time. I guess what I can draw on is the experience we've had with domestic violence and the mandating there, and how that made things happen. It made things change.

Mr. Randy Hillier: There are two other things. When we were up in Sudbury, we heard of a number of unique programs that the Sudbury police had implemented. I'm wondering what sort of sharing of knowledge from other police departments there is in this regard, for the different programs, and the effectiveness of these programs.

Also, you mentioned about innovative ways to assist and help people to testify. If you could share maybe with this committee what some of these innovative ways are, and also what sort of mechanism is there to share the effectiveness of those innovations with other police departments as well.

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: Recently, I presented an initiative to senior management in regard to a trauma dog. I don't know if anybody's familiar with Hawk the trauma dog at Calgary Police Service. He was the first dog in Canada that was used under the support person provision under the Canada Evidence Act to be used in court, to support a young girl who was sexually abused by her father. He was used to support her in court. There is also another dog, Caber, in Delta, BC, who's with the victim services unit, and has done the same kind of work. This is becoming quite a trend here in Canada. It's out west. We're going to be one of the first in Ontario.

Senior management was very receptive to the idea of enhancing the support we provide to victims already by incorporating a trauma dog. So we should be able to get that dog by, hopefully, September or October. They go through two years of full training right from the time they're born to ensure their temperament and that they're very docile and that they don't take on the stresses. So they're there strictly for emotional support and comfort. It has been shown that dogs reduce your blood pressure and increase your oxytocin, which is your feel-good hormone. So it makes it better in court or in giving testimony, or even giving their statement. We get a more credible—and a better understanding of the neurobiology of trauma and of what somebody is going through. They go back to that traumatic state; this relaxes them and allows them to give us a better statement of what's occurred.

So hopefully, if there's a dog suitable for us, we'll have a dog by September or October at Kingston Police.

Mr. Randy Hillier: And that last one about the sharing of these different programs like with the Sudbury police—are you guys aware of all these different programs? What sorts of mechanisms do you use to share that knowledge and implement it?

Ms. Antje McNeely: I would say that the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police has a number of mechanisms to share. I know the crime prevention committee has initiatives that they share within the organization as best practices, those kinds of things. Of course, there are opportunities with the CACP, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, as well as with the IACP, the International Association of Chiefs of Police. So there are those mechanisms where we can talk to each other and share innovative ideas on how we are doing things. Those are very valuable for us.

Mr. Frank Howard: I would just add that on our level, going to conferences and courses at the Ontario Police College—this is where we hear a lot of these initiatives, while they're in the planning stages. It'll just be conversations. That's why those seminars are so important: Someone will bring the idea up, and the next thing you know, all police forces will be trying to establish the same program.

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: Toronto and Niagara have sexual assault conferences yearly, and that's, like Frank said, a good opportunity for us to network and share ideas.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for coming and for bringing those very specific recommendations. One of the things that caught my attention was around a specific diversion program for youth as sexual offenders. You mentioned that it could be similar to the PAR program, which is court-ordered. So in cases where there is no interest in pursuing criminal charges but you have reports of a youth sexual offender, how would you get that youth offender into the program if there is no criminal proceeding to validate the offence?

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: In the case that I had, the family didn't want the court process but they were agreeable to a referral process. So as long as they're agreeable to enter into the referral, then we could use a specific program for them, the same as a PAR program, or mandatory sentencing.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. And is this what they have in place currently in Halton, did you mention?

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: No, they're establishing a regional protocol of how we're going to deal with adolescent sex-offending, and part of it is a referral process.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: And when you say "regional," how wide? What's the geographic region that you're referring to?

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: I don't have the protocol with me, but I think, right now, they're saying across Ontario.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. So this is under development currently—

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: Yes.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: —across Ontario to have some kind of a referral-based diversion to a specific program for youth offenders.

Is there a model from another jurisdiction that's proven effective in reducing subsequent reoffending among youth if they go through a specific program?

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: Yes. They have a whole protocol established, from basically the beginning of the process right through to the end of how we're going to treat young offenders, how to reintegrate them into their homes, if it's sibling-on-sibling sexual assaults.

I don't know how far they've come with it yet. It's just something that's been taught at police colleges, and ideas on, like you said, how we communicate ideas and share them. This is one way, and Halton has proposed this regional protocol. So I'm not sure, at this point, how far they've taken it, but they have a whole protocol put together with statistics and everything, supporting their idea.

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Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay, great. The other question I had is, many of your recommendations that you brought today—not many, but some of them were things that you can do yourself and that you're already doing. But for the purposes of this committee, as we're looking at moving forward with provincial-level recommendations, are there one or two things that you would highlight as being high priorities for the province to take action on in terms of mandating specific directions or legislative change?

Mr. Frank Howard: I guess I would say the things that we talk about—the justice system and things that we have no control over but that we see maybe negatively affecting a victim. That's really what our recommendations on the justice system are about, just things where maybe there are some shortcomings. We talked about the specific sex assault court with specific training for the judges, the crowns and everyone working in that courtroom. We've done it in other areas where it has been very successful, where these people become the experts in the field, and if you're not doing it every day, then you're not—sorry, I'm just kind of losing my thought here. I think it was that and—what else did you have?

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: I think just the youth diversion, having specific programs for adolescent sex offenders. I think that's something that could be—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Provincially mandated.

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: Provincial, definitely. Yes, because it's starting at a young age and preventing them from becoming adult sex offenders.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Can I make a request to the committee that we contact the Halton police force to find out more information about this protocol?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Can we put that before our research?

Ms. Melanie Jefferies: It's the Halton Trauma Centre.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Oh, the Halton Trauma Centre.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our research department will do that.

Our final questions for you this morning are from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm happy to help facilitate that conversation because I work closely with the Halton police and I'm aware of the program. Actually, our chief is from Kingston, so he spent a good part of his career at the Kingston PD, so it's a nice sharing.

It's so good to see you, and thank you, on behalf of all of us, for the life-saving and life-changing work that you do every day. I'm part of a police family, as you know, so I have a special affection and respect for you, as we all do.

To build on some of the earlier questions, in particular part of what MPP Hillier was saying, I know that there's a sharing of best practices that happens within the OACP and that you have conferences and that you share. But one of the things that really stood out for me in your remarks was the Smart Serve training. One of our earlier presenters, Kingston Youth Sexual Violence Prevention—I believe they're still here—talked about the issue of alcohol- and drug-facilitated sexual assault. They underscore the fact that you see that as a tremendous and burgeoning area of concern.

Can you talk to us a little bit about that Smart Serve training and how we can perhaps ameliorate it, change it or enhance it to make it more effective and to add that component? That's the first that I've heard of that kind of suggestion in our journey across the province, and it's interesting.

Mr. Frank Howard: Well, it was our suggestion, because we thought, "How else do we get the message to those people?" And we thought that if it was part of that training—not only to protect themselves, but to recognize it in patrons of a bar as well. Where are these things happening? Where do they start? They often start in bars where there are a lot of young people consuming alcohol. That's the only reason why we connected it to Smart Serve. We thought there's something already there. They're receiving training and maybe they could receive training about this topic as well.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Interesting. It's a great recommendation.

The other piece that I just wanted to touch on with you is that there seems to be an emerging school of thought, as we travel across the province, that the path to healing for a lot of survivors and victims of sexual assault and violence does not necessarily include the formal court process, but yet requires support. But for those people who do decide to report and go through the process, I was really pleased to hear your comments about sensitivity training for officers. Does your block training include that component now? And if it doesn't, should we be thinking about a province-wide training tool for officers that gets supplied through block training? Any thoughts on that?

Ms. Antje McNeely: I think it's a good idea. Our block training—not only is it use of force that we do, but we also invite speakers to come in, and there are recommendations throughout our organization that say where

we need some additional training. We use our community resources, our community partners to assist us and to do that training as well. I think that's a really important thing. Even ensuring that when we hire new recruits and even officers who are experienced who want to work for the Kingston police—it's important that we get them out there to our community agencies and introduce them face to face and say, "This is who they are; this is the face to the name." We're certainly doing that with our partners, and we just have to be mindful to continue doing that. Because not only do our partners enjoy meeting our officers, but it gives them a personal way to tell them what they're doing and what they're capable of doing, and it builds that trust. It's good to say you have protocols, but if you aren't actually out there physically working on that and meeting people—again, as part of block training, having your community partners coming in is very important.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We're very grateful for your submission this morning to this committee. Our only regret is that you don't already have your trauma dog. You could have brought it in for a visit. Next time.

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Next time.

Ms. Antje McNeely: And I think that's where the legislation needs to change, to allow that dog to come into the courtroom and to be there. That's the other thing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, folks. We invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

MS. JENNIFER O'NEIL

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter this morning: Jennifer O'Neil. Hi, Jennifer. Just come forward. Have a seat anywhere you like. If you'd like some water, please help yourself. There you go.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You've got up to 20 minutes to speak to our committee this morning and that will be followed by questions for you, if you're willing to take some questions. For the record, please start by stating your name and begin anytime.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Hi. I'm Jennifer O'Neil. It's nice to see all of you here. I'm going to do my best with this. Presenting today is really, really challenging. I live with complex PTSD and I'm talking about some of the most triggering stuff possible, so do bear with me.

I'm here today to share some of my experiences with sexual violence and our criminal justice system. All instances of sexual violence are unique, and I don't think that my voice is any more or any less valuable than any other survivors. I really wish I saw more of us here.

With that being said, my experience has been unique in a way that could be useful. I've survived our criminal justice system as a victim/witness in a sexual assault and the accused was found guilty; I've heard that's a 3-in-1,000 chance.

I don't wish to make this solely about a heart-wrenching narrative of abuse. I could do that, but I think that we all know how horrible this stuff is. If you'd like to hear my victim impact statement, I've posted it publicly to YouTube and I will be forwarding it to MPP Kiwala. However, to give you a sense of familiarity with me as a human being so that my words might matter a teensy bit more, I'm passing around some photos of myself as a child, just to keep in mind that I'm a human being with a history, who had a life before this happened.

Two and a half years ago, I was living in Toronto, working as a fashion model and a cook. I was really starting to make it in modelling. I had landed myself in a high-profile kitchen. I was pumped to see where those took me. I was enrolled in social work at Ryerson University, which I loved more than both of my jobs combined. All I wanted to do was get my degree together and find a job that could help me help others. That's really what I wanted. I had a gaggle of wonderful friends. I was unafraid. I was joyous.

Everything changed when I attended my staff party, a large staff party in a club atmosphere—not my usual scene, but I thought, “Hey, I usually work, so why not go?” I left my drink unattended for two minutes—stupid me—but nobody deserves what came next. From what I believe, I was drugged and I was then abducted, forcibly confined and violently sexually and physically abused by a complete stranger. To put it briefly, I was the recipient of an unwanted sedative placed in my drink without me knowing. This is what I believe.

I woke up in a stranger's car with a stranger, taken to an unknown location, manipulated, violently abused, threatened, taunted, humiliated and more. I was eventually released due to an effective coercion by the police in my community. My friends were aware that I was missing. If I didn't have a caring community I would not be here today.

I recall watching the Toronto skyline from the apartment I was confined in and I recall wondering if my loved ones knew that I loved them. I recall wondering if I had truly lived out anything resembling a destiny. And I recall realizing that I hated fashion modelling. I recall realizing that if I could just get out of there alive, I'd have to do something about rape culture, because this was insane.

As I found myself alive the next day, figuring out what to do next was a challenge. It's taken years. When your life gets blown up, it lacks a literal bomb going off. There's no messenger that shows up with an envelope telling you that everything is different now. You've just got to figure it out yourself. I knew I felt different. I knew something was different; I just didn't know what yet.

1050

What I eventually realized is that the incident left me with crippling PTSD, as I mentioned. I'm now a recipient of ODSP due to this. I was not disabled before this happened. This is so humiliating.

So why did I report? Why? We often ask why women don't report. Maybe asking why they do could narrow in

on the necessary conditions for when to participate in our justice system, because there are so few of us who do. I know there are a series of reasons why I decided to report, and I'd like to share those with you.

Thank you for listening so attentively.

Number one, I reported because it was horrible. We're all aware that criminal court is the pits, particularly for victim/witnesses, so after being sexually abused, if continuing on with life is an option, most people would opt for it, as the system offers little in terms of tangible protection or comfort. Pursuing criminal court is a theoretical act that lacks efficacy in keeping the victim safe, as restraining orders are potentially less than effective. But what I needed to know was that, at the very least, my country could recognize that what happened to me was a crime and that they were trying to do something. Why would I vote, otherwise? These were my most important interests. I reported because I care about sovereignty and government legitimacy.

I also reported because I'm a survivor of childhood sexual assault. When I was 11 years old I was ongoingly sexually violated by my best friend's older brother. It continued at school, and when I entered junior high—and that's something we need to think about, in terms of high schools and middle schools: We have no relationship between high school kids and kids in middle schools, and no protection for kids in middle schools.

I was in grade 7. I recall wetting my pants in class simply to avoid having to walk to the washroom, where he usually lurked, waiting to abuse me and whoever else he did this to. He was eventually sued in a class action lawsuit that I was not included in. I was afraid. I had nowhere to turn. Children do not have the same kind of power that adults do, and they are victim to sexual violence just as much as we are.

Knowing full well that I had just experienced a violent, very illegal assault, I could not in good conscience avoid reporting to spare myself discomfort. Civic responsibility goes beyond voting.

I reported because I have family support. My parents know of my history of abuse. They know how devastating sexual abuse is. They supported me in whatever I chose, and always made sure that keeping me alive was their priority. I knew I had that backing. I knew that there were people there to keep me from going off the edge.

I reported because I have a supportive and progressive community who understand the complexity and relevance of sexual violence. Without their support, I would not have had the courage to report. Without their support, I would not have had the courage to follow through with a trial.

I have top-end, privately funded healing resources, due to a community member offering me funds for my healing needs. I could never afford this on my own. I have spent most of my university money on therapists. I otherwise would not be able to afford any of this.

Some of our publicly funded resources are fantastic, but sexual trauma requires rigorous, ongoing, holistic care. It's gutting. There are no two ways about it. We

need more resources, and we need more integration between our resources. I didn't hear about most of the resources in Kingston that are available from V/WAP when I went there—Kingston and Toronto. I was at both. None of them directed me. I don't see most of the people who provide support for sexual trauma survivors in Kingston here today, and I don't know why.

I'm privileged. I'm white. I'm able-bodied. I'm hetero-seeming. I'm attractive. I did nothing to earn any of these things, but these attributes allow me more sympathy from the public at large. I look like a perfect victim. We have made the dire error of associating the reasoning behind sexual abuse with the characteristics of the survivor or victim. I realize we are trying to undo these beliefs through awareness-raising, but they're well and alive. Were I overweight, a person of colour, non-hetero or physically disabled, reporting this would have been impossible. We ascribe the shame we feel as victims to our other identities. When I was younger, I thought if I was smarter, prettier, if my parents were richer, if there wasn't something wrong with me that I couldn't figure out, this would have never happened. So when we favour certain people in society, we inadvertently give them greater access to justice.

I reported because the perpetrator was a stranger. Not knowing this person allowed me to think only of my experience and not of the impact that would reverberate throughout my community had I known him, had I started a "he said versus she said," or had he started a "he said versus she said." Naming a stranger as a rapist or a perpetrator is much easier than naming a community member, a family member, a spouse, a parent. We all like to think that evil lives outside the walls of our homes and familiarity. Unfortunately, this is not the case, and our communities or the people we live with everyday are ill-equipped to fairly and safely negotiate sexual violence within our private spaces, with or without state involvement. Our state doesn't know what to do, but our communities don't either.

I reported because I'm articulate and educated in the field of oppression. It gave me a tool kit to understand my experience and to defend myself against discrimination within the justice system. It helped me to advocate for myself, which was intrinsic to my success in completing court. For all of these reasons, I reported. While some of them are logical, many of them are entirely tied to my unearned privilege. I don't want my access to justice to be based on winning a discriminatory gene lottery. We need to make this more available. How do we do this? Because it does matter. I know that the other resources matter, too. Healing and staying alive is of the utmost importance. Women vote. Survivors vote. When this happens to your life, it creates a lens that you see your life through. We need to address this.

So for all these reasons, I reported. Clearly, ending sexual violence is going to require a committed, ongoing cohesive effort on the part of all political parties, leaders, interest groups, agencies, survivors, medias, communities, religious groups—everybody. Until I'm well

enough to return to my degree, my job as a survivor is to heal and to be as brave as I can, to speak whenever I can and to speak for myself, but to know that I'm not alone.

There are a thousand and one reasons why women don't report, and honestly, all of them are really good reasons. There are few reasons why women do report, and some of them aren't the best. Seeking justice, I believe, is good, but seeking justice on the basis of unearned, arbitrary characteristics that reinforce stereotypes feels horrible.

Moving on: Once you report, everything changes for the worst. The police officers, before my report, were calling my house, saying, "We think you have a good case. We really think you should report this. You matter." I listened to them and I thought about it, but it all changes once you make your statement. You're assigned a victim witness worker who you rarely speak to—they have very few. I wish V/WAP was here. I know they're state-funded. They are the people who deal with all of the survivors in court. They know what's needed.

The services offered by V/WAP are a pittance of what is necessary to aid a person through this process. They're understaffed and bound by the rules of criminal court; complainants are always at risk of being cast as not standing alone. You may not deviate from your initial statement before court. Any new information you share with the crown, V/WAP or anyone for that matter who is related to this process must be submitted to the defence.

I was told to stop journaling. I was told to reconsider how I spoke to the V/WAP professionals I was seeing, to avoid notes. I was told to get better, but to also stay so far under the radar that getting better quickly was not an option. Although my health status was eventually put on the books due to requiring ODSF, I am traumatized by the alienation that was forced on me by this process. I started to feel as though I was hiding something, even though I wasn't.

1100

Any identity that deviates from complete privilege makes accessing a fair SA trial substantially more challenging. Disclosing mental health concerns as a female complainant in a sexual assault case is frightening, as mythology and stereotypes are so frequently used to undermine complainant credibility. My mental health is an important part of the discussion in trial, not a tool to discredit me but as evidence of the impact of my perpetrator's abuse. This is what they call a 279 application. Thankfully, the rape shield law has made the process of cross-examination slightly less abusive and discriminatory than it once was; however, the "sluts or nuts" mythology—the idea that she's either a slut or crazy—is so embedded in the beliefs of our justice system that it perpetuates itself within the context of the rape shield law.

To avoid direct questioning regarding mental health or sexual history in cross-examination, the defence instead must file an application for this information to the judge. This extends the trial. It adds another date to determine whether or not the judge believes that your sexual history

or mental health is of relevance. In some cases, if they are filing for your medical files—anything on paper—you, as the complainant, have to go and get your own lawyer because if the state supported you in that, that would be considered a conflict of interest. I'm sorry, but that's pathetic. Nobody wants to be doing this. Throw them a bone.

It felt like a kick in the teeth. You live for over a year knowing that your email, your phone, your medical files and your sexual history may be all opened up in front of a room of people, in front of your perpetrator, and used to undermine you. I've done nothing wrong.

During the recess of this court date, the crown attorney reminded me that I had the option for a peace bond—an agreement that leaves the accused with no record and a one-year restraining order. If invading my privacy is so essential to a fair trial, then isn't suggesting to me to take a peace bond to avoid having my privacy invaded a complete contradiction of justice? We go so deeply into people's privacy that crown attorneys, just by having a heart, suggest, "You don't have to do this"—but he was guilty. If I had taken that peace bond, he would have walked; no record. He's not necessarily a safe person. It all gets so theoretical. It was weird. It was paternalistic. I wasn't even allowed in the room at that hearing—I wasn't allowed in the room for any of the hearings of this, except for the trial date itself. For most of that trial date, I was not allowed in the room—only for my testimony, cross-examination and afterwards. It felt like there was a group of parents speaking about what their kid had done. It was really strange, and I don't think anybody here would want that.

Then there's cross-examination. I'm going to get a bit graphic here, but I need to lay down for you where we are at in our system. After the requests for medical and sexual history were denied—therefore, it was not okay for the defence to ask me about these things—the first question I was asked was what pharmaceuticals I was on at the time of the crime and what their interaction would be with alcohol. The crown said nothing. I was in a position where I had to start answering, because you're not allowed to not answer, and eventually the judge stepped in, within a couple of minutes, and said, "This isn't appropriate," but it still happened. The power of suggestion is huge. What he did right there was plant the seed of my mental health and whether I'm reliable or not in everybody in the gallery's mind: "Is she crazy?"

I was then asked where the perpetrator was in my vagina. If I recall correctly, the average depth of a vagina is two to five inches. I'm no different than anybody else. How does a question like that get into our system? It traumatized me—answering a question like that. He asked me about my tights, my leotards, the difference between tights and leotards, socks, crotchless tights and pantyhose. He asked me about it again the next day—this is the defence lawyer. He asked if I was embarrassed and had made it all up. I'm trying to give you a picture of what being able to suggest anything looks like. I had to answer these questions in front of my family, in front of my husband-to-be and my loved ones.

He was found guilty. It has been six months since this happened, and he still hasn't been sentenced. I'd love some peace of mind, but the worst is over. I've said my victim impact statement. I'm still here and I'm not dead.

My main suggestions are to please improve communication with the federal government, to ensure that social transfers get made. As an ODSP recipient, I could have really used that money. I have never seen my ODSP worker because she is so overworked.

We need to improve our communication between agencies. Agencies are scrapping for money. There's cross-fighting. There is a lack of time and energy for them to integrate and come together and provide better services.

However, there is something that's working. The Sexual Assault Centre for Quinte and District, which I truly wish was here—and maybe they were in Ottawa; I'm not sure. But they've created what is seemingly—across race, class, gender and sexuality—integrative, holistic healing programs funded solely by fundraising. They have a state-of-the-art facility that they bought in Prince Edward county which was a former yoga retreat. They host survivors, male and female. The groups are gendered; there are male groups and female groups who go for a week at a time, for free.

The retreats include rigorous group therapy, physical activity, art, wholesome meals, outdoor activities, and community integration. It's a week of free healing. This is unheard of. Anyone from Ontario can apply. They're just Quinte, but they have reached out and made it available to everybody. That's what I mean when I see people really investing themselves in this effort. They're not just taking the funding they're receiving and doing the most with it; they're going the extra mile.

I participated in this healing program. I went for a week, and for the first time in years I saw myself. I felt myself feel normal in my body again. I was able to smile and have it feel honest. If I had had a month of this, I think I would be as right as rain right now. To not ensure that this group was here today—maybe they've spoken to you, but if you haven't heard from them, please speak to them. They know so much. They have initiative, motivation, information and an effective model of both therapy and, apparently, fundraising that works. It's incredible.

I think that survivor panels are really important. It's hard for us to understand what goes on for people, because SA is so bound by shame that nobody wants to talk. I don't want to be here today. I'm happy to on one hand, but on the other hand my kidneys feel like they're going to explode, I'm so stressed out.

We need to get survivors talking. I think that this panel is amazing. I'm always skeptical of political interest, especially—even though you guys are the province's—in the year before a federal election, but I do think that we should run with this. I really think that this should be the new "no coal." I think we should try to put ourselves on the map as being different than other provinces. I think we should really get moving.

I'm ready for any questions, if you want.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Jennifer, thank you so much for sharing so much of your personal story with us.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to start with MPP Peggy Sattler, with our NDP caucus.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh, I'm sorry. Was it going to be Taras?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: No.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh. I saw your microphone on.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I think we all want to give you a collective hug, because that was really important. Your courage and bravery are so valuable and significant to us, so thank you for presenting that story.

You mentioned something about how many of the services that you initially went to for support aren't here today. Were you referring to the Quinte and district sexual assault centre? We will definitely make the commitment to follow up to find out about them. Were there other services that you found particularly helpful in your experience following your decision to report?

1110

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Yes. Thanks for asking. Firstly, I think just getting everybody to the table is really important, but in terms of services, the Kingston neuro-feedback clinic is incredible.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: What's that called?

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: The Kingston psychotherapy and neurofeedback clinic. What they do is they offer—oh, boy, explaining this in its entirety is a bit too much.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Only what you're comfortable with.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: They offer types of therapy that help to retrain brains so that you operate less out of your amygdala and more out of your neocortex. A lot of trauma survivors mostly operate in a sort of reptilian brain. So they have some really effective therapies where you do not have to talk, and they're affordable. It's an investment in software and technology.

I wish I could have more of a chance to talk about what they are, but they're effective and survivors should just be going there right after trauma, because you don't want to talk after something like that happens. Their early childhood sexual assault and trauma centre—the links to these places, because I'm bad with names. But SWAG, the sex work interest group in Kingston, the Queen's Sexual Health Resource Centre, Queen's Legal Aid, all of these—there are a lot of little, little groups with next to nothing who do a whole lot.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: And how did you connect with these organizations? Were you basically on your own sort of trying to—?

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Yes. They offer referrals to SAC; I believe SAC receives funding from the government, so I think it's more likely that V/WAPs would be aware of them. But it's like, they give you a number, and people who have just been traumatized are

generally sitting in their basement, holding their head, shaking back and forth and not really picking up the phone. The integration involves facilitating survivors getting to the help they need, but also, yes, every community has a bunch of small resources. If we could integrate more, that might even save money, which is always cool.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Kiwala.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Jennifer, I want to thank you so much for being here today. One of the things I do want to say is that I'm just not sure if you realize what a very powerful place you are in right now. As MPP Sattler said, we all feel as if we want to just give you a giant hug, and I thank you for what you've brought forward to us today so articulately. We're very fortunate to have you here.

Just to pick up a little bit from what MPP Sattler has said in terms of organizations, I'm wondering if you can tell us, if you had a wish list of a way that, as a province, we could institute a first organization to reach out, what would that organization look like? Would it be—

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: To reach out to survivors?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Exactly, right after they have been victimized so that they can have a better experience than what you had.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: I guess there are a number of different answers to that, depending on what happens to a person. For myself, I had one of the better receptions. The police were at my house when I arrived home from the assault—that's a weird way to put it. The Toronto police are the most progressive cops in a lot of ways when it comes to SA in Ontario. My police officer was by no means a bigot or discriminatory, but—it was a dude; I had just been brutalized by a male. I was disoriented. I was confused. I believe I was on drugs, and I was so stressed that I threw up on my floor, and he asked me, "Are you drunk?" I was asked things like, "Do you need a rape kit?"

Coming from a police officer, the word "rape," if you even use it, feels like you're making an allegation. You don't know, if you go for these tests to get the essential evidence for your trial, if you're going to be forced into a trial, and you're so scared. So in this instance, if there had been a female officer present, or if we don't want to see all of our female officers entirely consumed by SA calls, maybe a social worker present working in conjunction with the police—because if you think about it, the cops are an institution that essentially uses authority and it's not really based on principles of social work or care or intersectionality. It's a lot to ask a cop to go from overseeing safety in a more aggressive way to being there right with someone in their experience ready to catch every piece of data by being a social worker. He used the word "rape kit" when he asked me if I needed an SA test, and I lost all my evidence because I didn't want to accuse anyone of rape.

If we can let women know that calling the police after an assault is not going to force them to report it—that

you can call the police and talk to them about what has happened and try to make a collective decision about whether something needs to be reported. Women often think that anything they do at first response will push them into the court process, and that's a terrifying thing to take on. If it's underlined at first response that anything you do right now will not force you into a trial, the likelihood of getting survivors to the SA test will go up. If you can have a social worker or a female officer—although, again, I don't want to peg female officers in one way—it would hugely improve the chances of survivors coming forward and making it into the system.

From what I've come to understand, cops even know how hard the system is and almost act like a filtration process from the get-go by informing survivors of their likelihood of making it to trial before they've even reported—"Well, you were drunk."

We really need to understand that offering care isn't just pats on the back. Offering sensitivity at first response isn't just a hand-hold; it's actually a critical part of making our justice system work.

Is that sort of what you were getting at? I don't know.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Yes, excellent. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for coming here. It's incredible that you had the strength to tell your story.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Thanks.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We had so many questions among us, we were trying to figure out what we could drill down to. You gave amazing testimony and information. The other members have focused on some of the questions I wanted to ask you.

You made some comments that you were told to stop journaling; you mentioned the application code 279. Some of what you said was—yes, your eyes are crossed, and you can do it better than I can. I was like, "Oh, my God."

You had to go and hire your own lawyer at a certain point. Could you just drill that down a little bit? If you are okay to do that, I would appreciate that. Take your time. You can even email after if you want to add anything.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: I would happily write out a non-emotional breakdown of how it works from what I understand.

But yes, it was pretty trippy. It was about a year before the actual trial date, and I had to sort of fight to get meetings with the crown attorney. Most people don't even see the same crown throughout the entire process. You don't really meet the crown. Due to my privilege, I kind of have a sense of entitlement, so I really made sure to meet with my crown attorney. He and the VWAP worker eventually told me they had made a request—"We don't know for what files, but files, so it will either be your phone, your email, your medical, your therapeutic"—like, they don't even tell you what area of your life they're going for.

1120

So I wiped myself off the Internet for a year and a half. I used to be a fashion model who was all over the Internet; it was my job. So when they apply for your paper files, if the crown were to defend you, what I've been told is that that would be the crown essentially paying—the state paying a witness.

There is legal aid available, but a lot of the legal aid isn't that great. I made it my mission to get a really good lawyer, and I did. I got the top lawyer for these applications in the country. Three days before the trial, the defence switched the nature of their application to being a request simply to be able to ask me questions about my sex life and my head. That meant that all of that work, months and months and months of work to retain this lawyer, who I had managed to get pro bono—and it was so much work to do this—mattered not. It was not necessary because the crown then represented me at the last minute. It appears that the defence pretty much has free rein over what happens when. I don't know; that's what I seem to gather from it.

The crown was basically trying to talk to the judge about why it was not relevant to ask me about my sexual history or my mental health. During the recess of this hearing that I was not allowed to sit in on, the crown came and reminded me: "This could go either way. After this hearing, you can't really call the trial off. If they do win, you are going to have to answer these horrible questions. So do you want to just call a peace bond?"

I'm just like, "But, but, I've been living knowing this is the case for over a year now. I've been sitting knowing that my privacy is going to be invaded for a long time. Yes, the defence is scary, but my head is way scarier than him." So it's the psychological terrorism that comes before, where you're just living, being like, "What did I do and why is this relevant, because my sex life doesn't actually relate to what happened?"

Then there's the process where justice gets derailed by trying to spare the complainant from potentially having these applications accepted.

So it's complicated, yes, but it seemed the whole way through to be completely wrong.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I think my colleague wants to follow up specifically, because that's what we're trying to figure out. This is too hard on victims. It's revictimization over and over again, and we're trying to use your experience to figure out, because this is way too hard on—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have time for one more question.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much.

When you were telling us your story, there was a part where it sounded to me like the crown or the system was encouraging you that your therapy and your mental well-being and the things you were doing to help yourself physically and mentally were a detriment to the justice side.

If we can figure that out and find out what it is in our system that we can change—seeking justice should be of

great benefit to your mental and physical health, not a detriment; it should not be negative. So if you could just maybe give us a little bit clearer picture. I know you mentioned about no journaling, but there were a few other things there that I couldn't write down fast enough.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: They didn't say "no journaling," but what they said was, "Be aware that anything that you write that we find out about will have to be submitted to the defence's evidence." That in and of itself kind of encompasses—like, you could draw a picture and they could submit that.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: It's broad, but sexual violence is different than having your house broken into, because it's your body and there's so much shame. There's so much shame. You don't want to talk about it. It happens, and you're, like—it's so confusing.

So, then to do everything you can to come forward with it and then be told, "No, don't speak; whatever you do, don't speak," it sort of reinforces the silence, the shame. So it just seems like there's a competing interest between healing—

Mr. Randy Hillier: So would this be, if you were seeing a therapist or other forms, that the defence could then apply for those records as well?

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Yes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: That was why you'd be cautious about helping yourself?

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: Yes. I felt a little sneaky, but I had to say to my therapists, "Don't write notes on me. Don't write notes, because I need to talk to you." I needed my support teams. I had nothing to share that was nefarious or against the trial. It was just me being, like, "Hey, my life is decimated. What do I do?"

To me, it just seems that we've somehow come to believe—in this system, on a very deep level—that it's characteristics of the complainant that lead to sexual assault.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Jennifer, I want to step in here and say, on behalf of this committee, that we are very grateful that you have shared your personal story with us. We wish you much success in the future on your journey of healing. Thank you so much.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neil: No worries. Have a good day. Cheers. Thanks.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE KINGSTON

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call on our next presenter, Sexual Assault Centre Kingston. Please come forward.

Make yourselves comfortable. You're going to have up to 20 minutes to make your presentation to this committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please begin by stating your names and the name of your organization, for the record.

Ms. Elayne Furoy: My name is Elayne Furoy, and I'm with the Sexual Assault Centre Kingston.

Ms. Kim Graham: Kim Graham, Sexual Assault Centre Kingston.

Ms. Elayne Furoy: I just want to, obviously, thank the committee for being here today. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to speak to you. We're very excited about this.

I also want to acknowledge Jennifer and say thank you for coming out and speaking today. It's always very powerful and impactful to hear stories. It's very grounding for us who are in the field and who do this work. So thank you for that. I'd just like to acknowledge that.

I'd like to start off with a scenario, which Jennifer touched on and said this isn't like your house was broken into. I'd like all of you just to take a moment and envision yourselves where, over the weekend, you were the victim of a home invasion. You were at home at the time. Two people broke into your home. They were loud. It was unexpected. There was a lot going on. You felt threatened. You went out the back. They took a few things along the way.

What I want you to imagine is, the next week, when you return to work, what that looks like. I'm going to give you a potential example. You might gather around your work colleagues. You might make a big announcement, tell them what happened. People would respond to you. They would be shocked. They would be angry. They would be upset, empathetic. You would have people, later on in the week, calling you and saying, "I just heard. Are you okay? That is terrible."

Later on, people at work would check in with you, say, in a few weeks, and say, "How are you doing with all of that? How is that working out?"

Let's say that months later, you started to have flashbacks and nightmares. You might go back to your work colleagues and actually feel comfortable sharing that with them, because they are so supportive of you. They might offer to take work off your plate. They might offer extra time off—anything to do, if they saw that you were inattentive or forgetful because of your sleep disruptions. They would be very supportive.

So you would be given support, and you would deserve all of those things, because, after all, you were a victim of a crime.

Never at any time would anybody say to you, "Well, what did you expect by living in that nice neighbourhood?" They wouldn't say, "Are you sure you didn't invite them in?" They wouldn't ask what you did to prevent such a thing from happening, nor would they question whether the whole thing really happened the way you said it happened.

1130

Obviously, I'm going back to change the scenario now, and you were sexually assaulted over the weekend instead of being a victim of a home invasion. Imagine your reality when you return back to work. I'm going to bet that you're not going to gather your colleagues around and make a public announcement. You may choose to tell a few select people, and when you do that it will be in private and it will be very difficult. You might

be met with awkwardness, silence. People are uncomfortable about this; they don't know what to say. So when you tell them, they usually don't have much to say. They don't check in with you weeks later to say, "How are you doing with that?" Sometimes people will even avoid you. There might be conversations at work about the incident, but you wouldn't be part of those conversations. There might be speculation and questions about whether it happened the way you said it happened, particularly if you knew the person or if they knew the person.

My point is: You would not get support from your workplace, from your employer, from your workplace colleagues. This would be something where you would go to work every day—I know you all put in long hours—and the people around you would likely have no idea this was what you were going through. But you would deserve that support because, after all, you were a victim of a crime.

If you're looking for support you might go to a local sexual assault centre, if there is one, and there you would be believed. You would get support. You would get empathy. And never at any given time would anybody ask: "Are you sure that's what happened?" or "What did you do to prevent such a thing from happening?" Later, when you had flashbacks and trauma, they would normalize that experience for you and say, "You know what? You have been through a very terrible thing, and that's a very common thing that people experience after a sexual assault." They would give you hope. They would say, "You will get through this."

Sadly, this juxtaposition is a reality in our communities. Often people do not get the support that they need and deserve from their normal support systems—from their workplace, from their families or from their natural supports or their friends. This is why sexual assault centres exist and this is why it's so important, the work that we do, because often survivors are not getting the support that they need and deserve within their own natural support systems. That was one of the points that I wanted to make today.

I also want to make the point that how survivors access support services is very unique. When they choose to come to us for support—for how long and within what time frame—is very individualized. We have people who might come in for individual counselling or they might attend group counselling or they might attend both. Some survivors require long-term support, and you've heard here today about complex trauma. This is an interesting point to keep in mind because funders don't like to fund long-term services. Nobody wants to fund you to support the same five survivors for two years, and so there's this increasing pressure to shorten our services to go to a short-term counselling model and to always be looking at the intakes and the numbers—that's how funding models are set up. I understand that; it's important to be accountable to our funders and to our governments. However, this is something to keep in mind when we're looking at how to best support survivors. We have to recognize that it's important not to put timelines on that type of support.

It's also important to recognize that recovery work is very cyclic in nature, meaning that often people will come into our centre for support at different times in their life and they often will access us in different ways. Life events such as a pregnancy, maybe the beginning of a relationship or the ending of a relationship or an anniversary date can spur on somebody to want to come in and re-access support, and this issue will become a reality for them and they'll want to talk about it and do a piece of work around it. I think it's very important that how people access our support is varied, and it's unique.

We serve both recent and historical cases. I really want to emphasize that, with the exception of young women, most of the requests for support that come in are for historical childhood sexual abuse, or historical childhood sexual abuse combined with a recent event. I would say that's probably the majority of our caseload. So we're dealing with people who've had repeated trauma, and this is not something that you can unpack in three to six months. We've served survivors whether they report or not; in fact, I would say the majority of the people we work with do not report, for a multitude of reasons which I'm sure you've heard about.

It's interesting to note that a lot of response protocols really focus on immediate support for the survivor, so as soon as they've been assaulted it's like, "Okay, call the police, call security, go to the hospital and call your local sexual assault centre." We really want to make the point that that's typically not how people are accessing our support, or that's not what survivors need. Often, like I said, people will parachute in and out. This type of recovery work is very cyclic in nature. That's just something kind of important, I think, to keep in mind.

I just want to talk a little bit about our local centre. We've been in existence for 35 years. We have a population of 190,000 that we serve, and we have a large rural catchment area of 6,660 square kilometres. We are similar to other sexual assault centres that you've probably heard from. We have a crisis line; we have individual and group counselling, first-response programs and accompaniments; and we do training and public education. All of our services are free and confidential.

Our budget is slightly over half a million. We get about \$320,000 from the Attorney General. We're forced to find alternative sources of funding through other venues, and also through fundraising. This is very taxing. It takes a lot of time and resources. We don't have dedicated fundraising staff, so we're doing these things on the corner of our desk.

I just want to make a point, too, about sexual assault centres and how we're different from other types of counselling. The first way that we're different is that we come from a feminist framework—yes, the F-word. There's a lot of misunderstanding about what that means, and I just want to clarify that. We identify the systemic context within which violence against women occurs: Sexual violence is power-based, it's gender-based and it is structurally supported.

One of the most exciting things about the Ontario government's action plan was the recognition that sexual

acts, sexual violence—they're not just isolated incidents and they don't just occur in a vacuum, but rather they occur within the context of sexism, misogyny, rape culture and victim blaming. That is what feminist counselling is. When we work with individuals, we are addressing those broader context issues as well. Those are things that have to be taken into account.

We also take a trauma-informed approach. Trauma is very popular nowadays; you're hearing a lot about "trauma-informed." Interestingly, some of that came out of the feminist work, so we've been doing that stuff for a long time. Basically, with trauma, we're defining sexual violence as traumatic. It's an abnormal and life-threatening event. I think we always need to keep in mind that when people experience sexual violence, they do feel like their life is in danger, so it is a life-and-death experience.

With trauma, we don't tend to focus on a medical model; we don't focus on diagnosing our symptoms or labelling a person with depression or anxiety. We try to normalize a person's response as a normal response to trauma; anybody that went through what you went through would be experiencing these symptoms. We're changing the question from "What is wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?", and that's a really important distinction.

Finally, in feminist counselling we incorporate survivors' voices and expertise. At our agency, we place a high value—and we ask for survivors to help us guide our work. From our staff to our board to our volunteers, we have women with lived experience working alongside us. We also consult regularly with former and current service users in a variety of ways. We believe this is really critical to developing effective policy and meaningful services. We're really glad that we've actually had people with lived experience coming out and speaking to you today, and we just want to encourage the Ontario government to continue to incorporate survivors' voices in the work that's being done. We do believe that they're the experts and they have a lot of valuable feedback and can help guide us.

I'm going to turn it over to Kim now, so thank you.

1140

Ms. Kim Graham: I'm just going to touch a little bit on what Elayne had mentioned in regard to the population we serve. I did hand out a map; I don't know if you guys have it. We serve both the orange and the green outlined areas. Kingston, unfortunately, is not geographically central to those areas. So for us to serve a population, either we have to travel two hours north or clients have to travel two hours south, one way.

We also receive a lot of clients from the Leeds and Grenville area. That's because they don't have a specialized sexual assault centre. They often come to us, or we have gone and done public education in that area as well. I just wanted to point that out as well.

There is research that shows that teens in rural school districts are more likely to be victims of dating violence, which includes sexual violence. Then there are suburban

and urban counterparts. So we are left with concerns of that population being underserved because of lack of transportation, staffing, funding and just the time that it takes to cover the large rural area that we have.

The female population in the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington area, 15 and up, is about 88,000. If we use the StatsCan statistic of one in three women experiencing sexual violence, we know that that works out to be about 30,000 women that we have the opportunity to serve. If we look at our funding, that's about \$10 a person. This does not count the 30,000 Queen's University students, the 5,000 St. Lawrence College students or the 1,900 RMC students, who make up a large part of our client base. That age group is specific to what we see mostly at our work, and you've heard it here today: alcohol- and drug-facilitated sexual assault. A lot of that population experiences that kind of sexual assault.

We're also seeing a large increase in victims who have been sexually trafficked. Kingston is located along the 401 corridor, right between Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto. Our location and population is an ideal spot for traffickers to traffic women for sex for short periods of time before moving on. Those who have been trafficked require specialized services and often immediate response and safety measures that are already put into place. There's a short window of opportunity to safely respond to a trafficked victim, and we need to be better prepared to help.

Indigenous women are another population that is under-represented in our community and throughout Canada and specifically through specialized funding of services. Yet we know that, as a marginalized group, aboriginal women are at an increased risk of sexual assault compared to non-aboriginal women.

At SAC Kingston, we don't have a funded designated aboriginal counsellor. However, we're lucky enough to have a counsellor who is a visible aboriginal woman and does take on clients who are looking for specialized aboriginal counselling. But, again, she also has to take on the rest of her caseload. So we just don't have funding, and she often ends up with a wait-list. It would be beneficial to us to have specific funding for aboriginal clients.

For myself, I do public education, so I work in prevention. I have to do the prevention of these two counties here. I've worked personally in many social service agencies, but working in the violence-against-women sector, in particular sexual assault, has by far been the hardest, and not because of solely the stories or the work that we do, but rather when I step out into the community, it's how I am treated; how we have to constantly defend the work I do while worrying about my own safety and if I am offending someone for actually speaking reality. This really reflects just how lonely the work can actually be.

Some of the harassment that female journalists have recently felt and that you've seen on TV is something that I experience on a daily basis. When I go out with my sexual assault sign, I get a lot of comments that, "People

are liars”; “Women lie”—those kinds of things. I’ve had letters sent to me. I’ve had stuff brushed off my table at information fairs. In society, we still have a lot of work to do just for me as a public educator. I can only imagine what it would be like as a survivor to have to go and say their story.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I’d like to let you know you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Kim Graham: Oh, okay.

The harassment that’s felt by these journalists is something that we feel as well. We shouldn’t have to worry about our safety or offending someone. Society as a whole doesn’t get it. There seems to be some disconnect when we work with the public in regard to child sexual abuse victims, and then adult and youth survivors, especially those in regard to alcohol- and drug-facilitated sexual assaults. There somehow seems to be some blame for their assault and abuse.

I just wanted to say that if we can work together, some of the recommendations we have are a funded court response worker—we’d like funded, specialized rural services, transportation satellite offices, funded aboriginal specialized services and an increase in funding for prevention work as well.

Sorry. I wrapped that up really fast.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We have some questions for you now, beginning with our Liberal caucus. MPP Kiwala?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you so much for being here and thank you for your work in our community. As a very critical front-line worker, we really respect and appreciate the work that you have been doing.

On the public education piece, I’m just wondering if you can elaborate for us if there’s anything—one of the groups that we haven’t touched very much on today is the LGBT group. I’m wondering if you can elaborate on anything that you’re currently doing for this group or something that you feel the province should do better to reach out to this group.

Ms. Kim Graham: Sure. I’m pretty excited that it was included in the new curriculum, so that will be exciting. We’ll see some exciting stuff, I think, happening in September.

Currently, I have some really good partnerships with HARS Kingston. There’s the FUSE Youth Group, which is the youth group that’s run out of there for LGBTQ youth. I do a lot of work with a lot of LGBTQ sort of groups within Kingston. There’s Rainbow YGK, I think it is, that’s starting now, as well as a trans group.

I think it’s important to remember that group in particular when you’re discussing any kind of violence, and when you’re discussing marginalized groups, they are also included in that marginalized group.

So I’m excited to see what will come out of the curriculum, but again, that doesn’t address a lot of the youth that aren’t in school and a lot of older youth.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here today. I enjoyed your presentation.

One of the most striking ones was when you made the comparison to a home invasion and how somebody would respond to that as compared to a sexual assault. That was the first time I had heard it put in those terms. It certainly makes you wonder and puts things into a very different light. It’s one of the things that has bothered me or troubled me on why women don’t report, which we really need to address. So that comparison—I’m still not sure how we can use it right at the moment, but it gives us lots to consider and think about because, again, in the home invasion you’re going to tell people and you’re also, in all likelihood, going to go straight through the justice system to seek some justice, where the alternative for sexual assault is not there, or not in the same light. So I’m going to ponder that—and if you’ve got any other suggestions that you can send to the committee on how we can alter that and make not such a significant contrast between those two examples.

But I also wanted to mention about fundraising, because you mention that. I’ve been elected now for eight years. My very first interaction with a shelter was after I got elected, and fundraising came up in that discussion. For myself, a lot of people in the community shelters are unseen; they’re unknown. It’s not like a storefront. You don’t have a big sign out there.

1150

I’ve been involved in a lot of fundraising with Lanark County Interval House. One of the added benefits of raising the funding is also just adding community awareness that the shelter is there, that the service is there, and that the service is actually an integral and necessary part of the healing process. We couldn’t do it without a shelter, without an Interval House or a sexual assault centre.

So I would just suggest to you that the fundraising could be a wonderful opportunity as well as having some added benefits for the community as well as yourself.

Ms. Kim Graham: We have a storefront and a sign. We’re quite visible. But the minute you throw in the words “sexual assault,” it’s a barrier for people. It’s much different for people to see domestic violence as an issue, as opposed to sexual assault, because of the stigma that’s attached to it. People who donate to a sexual assault centre don’t want their names out there, because they don’t want people to think that they’ve been sexually assaulted and that’s why they’re donating.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation. Particularly, your initial story about the difference was very powerful.

You mentioned that you serve 30,000 students from Queen’s, St. Lawrence College and RMC. We’ve heard from post-secondary institutions about students’ experience of sexual violence, and oftentimes it’s in the first eight weeks of the first year of post-secondary.

To think of a first-year student who is on their own for the very first time—they're in a strange community, in a brand new setting—how do they know about the services of your centre? How does that relationship work with these post-secondary institutions to let students know that the supports you provide are available?

Ms. Elayne Furoy: Do you want to answer that?

Ms. Kim Graham: Do you want me to answer again?

Ms. Elayne Furoy: Yes.

Ms. Kim Graham: We do do training with resident advisers and the peer support group and the Sexual Health Resource Centre here at Queen's as well as RMC health promotions and the St. Lawrence College residence. So they do know of us.

Most students use Google.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Oh, Google—not very reliable.

Ms. Kim Graham: Yes. They're not going in the phone book. That's what most students would do if they reached out.

There are signs throughout Queen's University and St. Lawrence College that advertise our crisis line, and in girls' washrooms and that kind of stuff.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Elayne and Kim, I want to thank you both very much for coming and chatting with us today. I know you want to continue the conversation; you may do so.

Committee members, I just want to alert you that the hotel has told us that 12 noon is a sharp checkout time. This is why I'm letting you know this now, so that you may do that.

I thank you very much for coming and sharing your information with us. I do encourage you to continue the conversation if you wish to.

We are in recess until 1 p.m. Thank you.

The committee recessed from 1155 to 1300.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. We are ready for our afternoon session. I'd like to welcome all of our presenters here today and the guests who are with them.

Let me share the mandate of this committee with you. We are here to listen to the experiences of survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. However, I do want to stress that we do not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

We welcome you.

KAWARTHA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our first afternoon presenters, from Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre. Please come forward. Good afternoon. Make yourselves comfortable. If you'd like, pour yourself some water. Ladies, you're going to have 20 minutes to speak to our committee, and after that they will have

some questions for you. For the record, begin by stating your names and start anytime.

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: Okay. Thank you. I'm Sonya Vellenga, executive director with the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: And I'm Lisa Clarke, needs assessment project manager at the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre.

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: We just rushed in—a little bit of traffic. We were not sure if we were going to make it. We're a bit resource-low at the office, so I thought I'd say that to start.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Well, it's good to see you and we're glad you're here.

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: Thank you. Anyway, I am Sonya Vellenga and I am the executive director at the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre. The office is located in Peterborough and we cover four counties: the city of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton, Northumberland and Peterborough. I've been with the centre for three years, and my work history prior to working with the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre was in child welfare. I spent 18 years in child welfare, seven years front-line, and then moving around the child welfare system in supervisory roles.

Of course, in child welfare you investigate allegations of harm to children, whether that be physical harm, emotional harm, neglect or sexual abuse. In my history in child welfare, the cases of sexual abuse that we investigated largely involved family members, and they weren't frequent occurrences on my team.

I speak to this in the handout that you received; if I look at the Ontario incidence study and the Canadian incidence study, generally the statistics are that fewer than 3% of substantiated cases are assigned under sexual abuse of children, which is very low when we consider that the statistic that we use in the province of Ontario is that one in three will experience sexual abuse, sexual assault, along the continuum of their lifespan. So 3% is very low, and that certainly has been commented on in the literature. Does 3% reflect the reality or does it reflect a different reality?

When I joined the sexual assault centre, I understood that my primary role was to work with individuals who had been sexually assaulted. Because of my child welfare history, I understood sexual assault to be an adult phenomenon, whereas sexual abuse was something that children experienced. Children experienced abuse because it was by somebody in a position of power, below them; adults experienced assault and related it to the Criminal Code and how the Criminal Code is set up. Within a few months of being there, I understood that over 70% of the individuals who accessed our centre were individuals who had experienced sexual abuse as children.

I've spent time over the past three years really thinking about that. Did we miss something in child welfare? If in the Canadian statistics, matched by the Ontario incidence studies—and they do these studies every five

years; the last one was just 2013—it was less than 3%, then what is it that we're missing? I've learned that there's a lot that we're missing. Really, I've kind of bulleted it in the handout that I gave you and I'm just going to reflect on this.

What I've learned is that the continuum and the definitions of sexual abuse and sexual assault are very broad and very complex. We tend to think about sexual abuse on the far end of the continuum and we don't always consider the impact on the other end of the continuum. When I say "far end," I mean the end that, in the past, we would have called incest or rape, and this end—not saying one's close or far—being harassment, exploitation, bullying of a sexual nature.

Defining it narrowly also then leads us to thinking about the responses in narrow ways. I'm here today really wanting to encourage the task force to think about responses in a diverse, broad way, not just, "Is it a legal response that we need? Is it a medical response that we need?"—but thinking about the continuum of experiences being very broad and complex. Thus, the continuum of responses also needs to be broad and complex.

I've learned that most individuals know who has harmed them, and that's in children and adults. So it means, also, that our response needs to include those who are doing the harming and it needs to include intervention in that area, at that level.

I've learned that youth, particularly between the ages of 14 and 25—some research has 16, but 14 to 25—I'm kind of bumping it down because of the experiences youth are experiencing today on the Internet and the bullying and exploitation that's occurring on the Internet for both males and females. Certainly that's a phenomenon that I think the task force needs to consider in terms of the whole continuum of sexual violence.

I see that area as increasing. We had a call last week from a mom of a young teenage boy. This mom is with Community Living, so her child has an intellectual challenge. He's downloaded an app called Ticky, which I haven't looked up yet—I will. This app allows him to send pictures, and so he's sending pictures out there.

We had a call on our crisis line last night from a mom whose daughter is in a relationship with two other individuals and they're exchanging pictures. So exploitation and harassment and violence on the Internet is certainly something that I think we, as a society, as a province, need to pay attention to.

Individuals in small and rural communities—I note that we're in a four-county area. We've got some small communities. I had a call the other day from a woman in Thurstonia who rents from somebody, and the landlord has a key to her place and has sexually assaulted her. She lives in a very rural area and does not have access to a lot of supports—so looking at how we can support somebody. Our office is in Peterborough; Thurstonia's a bit of a drive. There's no transportation. Certainly there's telephone and crisis response, but it's very difficult to provide a response that's matched up with what the research says in terms of response that would be valuable and appropriate for this individual.

The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community—I've learned that there are high-risk factors there, and we've certainly experienced that in our Peterborough office.

1310

I've learned that medical responses—to look at saying that we need to beef up our medical responses. That certainly is true for those who experience violent sexual assault. It's less true for those who experience, as I said earlier on, the continuum.

Police responses and legal responses are risky. I'm sure you've heard that as a select committee from others. They're risky for the individual. I'm not convinced that legislative changes there can take away that risk. If you're robbed in a corner store and the person behind the counter in that corner store is robbed, they are never asked what they did last night in order to be robbed today. In this field, they're always asked.

It's very risky for individuals. It's risky because individuals, if a conviction does not happen, can be sued. There's a high-profile case in Peterborough where a young woman is being sued through civil courts because a conviction wasn't landed. She made an allegation; she went through the court process. The individual was found not guilty, and she is now being sued for lots and lots of money.

I've learned that modelling of healthy relationships has been absent from many of the individuals who come to our centre—absent in schools, absent in social media, absent in media of all sorts, and absent within their families—so looking at interventions in that area, and I certainly support the work of the physical education curriculum that's being introduced by the province for September.

Confronting attitudes and behaviours that contribute to this issue help move shame from the victim, and would certainly support that.

I am presenting today with Lisa because she has also done a lot of work. I'm realizing I'm looking this way maybe because it's Laurie and I'm looking to you, Laurie. I'm going to look this way, too. But I'm here with Lisa, who has been quite involved with a research study in Peterborough, and she's going to share some of that information with you.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: Thank you. In May 2015, the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, with the support of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough, the YWCA Peterborough Haliburton, the Peterborough Domestic Abuse Network—which is our table there—and the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres began a city- and county-wide needs assessment, funded through Status of Women Canada. This is a project that's happening in three other regions of Ontario and it is happening across the country. We're connected to them all.

The theme that we're studying is access to community services in the prevention and response to sexual violence against women and girls. I just want to be clear that when I say "women and girls," the use of the word "woman" or "girl" is intended to speak to all women,

irrespective of socio-economic status, educational level, age, HIV status, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and cultural, racial, ethnic or religious backgrounds. We work from an anti-oppressive framework. I think that's important about our centre.

To date we've had 28 one-on-one survivor interviews with survivors of sexual violence; 19 focus groups with a total of 160 front-line staff; SWOT analysis of our consultant group, which includes leaders from 19 different local agencies working within the violence-against-women sector; and we have 131 responses to our online survey to date, which is open until June 5.

This study includes two gender-based analysis consultant evaluators who specialize in the violence-against-women sector. One is Ian DeGeer and another is Tara Williamson. Their accreditation is within this information. We have run this study through a community-based ethics review committee.

We have big intentions with our study. We are publishing a public report card; writing a collaborative service agreement and protocol; building online training; hosting a national conference at Trent University on June 2 and 3, 2016; and we will be publishing an academic paper on our findings.

I have heard the personal stories of over 200 people, and I am a survivor of sexual violence myself. Our stories together speak volumes about the systemic misogyny of gender-based violence in our country, in our province and in our community.

I wanted to share some of our preliminary findings from the city and county.

Sexual violence as defined by the United Nations is a continuum of harm not fully recognized by Canadian law. I think that's very important.

Girls and women aged 15 to 24 years old are at highest risk of being victims of sexual violence in our community, as well as in Canada.

Eighty percent of victims of sexual violence are female, and 20% are male.

There is no data tracking sexual violence in the LGBTQ community by organizations.

In Canada, 75% of sexual violence is perpetrated by someone known to the victim. In our community, it's 96%. We have no stranger violence.

In 97% of reported cases of sexual violence, the perpetrator is male.

Women are not providing strong peer-to-peer support networks for women. We have mean girls in every generation of our community. We are not there for each other.

Sexual violence crosses all socio-economic levels, although women living in poverty with mental health or addictions experience higher incidence of sexual violence. In fact, the majority of online survey participants self-identify as pursuing college and university education, with a household income of over \$75,000. We were very surprised by that result.

According to indigenous service organizations, 100% of the indigenous women and girls in our region, including two First Nations, have experienced sexual violence.

Sexual harassment and an environment of rape jokes in the workplace significantly impact families in the home.

Sex work in our community begins with the exploitation of marginalized girls and young women in exchange for housing, drugs and safety.

Law enforcement officials themselves have no faith in the justice system to support victims and witnesses of sexual violence.

Athletic teams, including hockey teams, are breeding grounds of misogyny and rape culture.

Indigenous women are trafficked out of our community to Oshawa and Toronto through exploitation of their substance addictions.

I have had the privilege, through this study, to be the only person to ever have heard several of these women's stories. Most of the women I have spoken to remained silent for decades about their childhood sexual abuse, sexual assault as young women, intimate partner violence and sexual harassment in the workplace. Their voices, heard through our study at the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre's doors, became a very empowering experience, and we expect to see these women back.

Some overall highlights I can give you about the survivors we have spoken to: The greatest impacts to female victims of sexual violence are on quality of life, family life and romantic relationships. They have also experienced impact on health and friendships.

Over 40% of women received support from counselling services and 35% from friends, but none of them received significant support from family, police and legal services, medical services, school guidance services, shelter services, or spiritual or congressional leadership after their victimization.

Mothers who have experienced sexual violence and intimate partner violence need professional support in speaking to their children about their victimization in order to break the cycle of violence. Many survivors had adverse childhood experiences, including childhood sexual abuse and witnessing domestic violence or unhealthy adult relationships in the home.

The action plan message by our province is being heard by victims of sexual violence. If they were to experience that violence today, they would access sexual assault centre support, followed by medical services, police services, community counselling, crisis lines, shelter services, victim services and then online support.

Survivors of sexual violence prioritize prevention education for girls and boys under the age of 17, followed by sexual violence prevention targeted at men aged 17 to 24. That's what survivors say.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Lisa, you have one minute remaining.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: One minute? Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): However, if you wish to continue, it will just reduce the amount of time we have for questioning.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: Okay. Our final point is, survivors also prioritize prevention education messages to be delivered primarily through social media, followed by

conversations in the home led by parents and guardians, conversations in the classroom led by teachers and one-on-one conversations by trusted adults.

What I would wrap up with is that the action plan is an excellent action plan, and we fully support it, as well as the recommendations by the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres. What we feel you may have missed within that action plan is the voice of children and the voice of older women who have also experienced the continuum of violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

1320

Ms. Laurie Scott: I feel like I shouldn't be asking the questions, because I see you more often than the rest of the members here.

Thank you very much for coming. It is a distance to travel, and you have very important work. I know that you never have enough people to help support the victims that you deal with. So I want to thank you for all that you do. You represent the majority of my area. I've met with them often, as you've heard.

I kind of wanted to go back to the person from Thurstonia who phoned you. We're trying to figure out coordination, which is sometimes lacking. Some communities are better at coordinating services than others.

In our community—so we'll say that's just a rural community in Ontario; you brought it up—how do they know to phone you? Did they phone the police? Did they want to phone the police? Just kind of that psychology of maybe that case—to bring forward.

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: We do ask on every call, "Why did you call us?", because we want to know as well. This individual was encouraged to call us through victim services. In this particular case, this individual had involvement of the police. When you have involvement of the police and if there's a charge laid, then victim services get involved.

In this particular situation, this woman has a brain injury, and the alleged perpetrator is 82 and may also be experiencing some dementia. I haven't talked to the police, but I would suspect that a charge was not necessarily plausible because the hope of anything down the road, because of the two individuals, wasn't there. They referred to victim services. Victim services generally gets involved if a charge is laid, but a charge wasn't laid, so victim services told the individual to call us.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Ms. Laurie Scott: You're probably going to cut me off, but I just want to say thank you for coming. I look forward to the final completion of your survey. What you've found so far is pretty shocking to a lot of us. We'll talk later.

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: You've done fantastic work.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next questions for you are from MPP Taras Natyshak.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you very much for your presentation. Thanks for the work that you do on behalf of your community and, really, on behalf of the province and the government of Ontario.

I have two comments and then a question. My comment is, Sonya—may I call you Sonya?

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: Yes.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Sonya, you referenced us as a task force. We are a legislative committee, but we should be looking at ourselves as a task force.

You had told us that the issues are broad and complex and, as such, our remedy or our recommendations should be broad and complex. I would ask my committee colleagues to open our minds, when we do get to the reporting stage, and that we take that into consideration.

Lisa, in your stating some data here, in 97% of reported cases of sexual violence, the perpetrator is male. In 96%, the perpetrator is someone known by the victim. Then, whether you realize it or not, you said that we have no stranger violence.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: We have very little. So 4% is stranger violence—unknown.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Yes. I don't want to discount those who have been affected, and victims of stranger violence.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: Absolutely.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: In fact, we heard testimony earlier today by someone who had been a victim of stranger violence, and she was more inclined to report because of the fact that it was a stranger.

My question is, I wonder what the barriers are. Are there more significant barriers when the violence is perpetrated by someone who is known by the victim, and how do we overcome those barriers? How do we get the victim to the point where they feel secure and feel safe to be able to report, to a larger extent than it's currently going? Because we've heard, I think, that under-reporting is an issue.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: Absolutely. Statistically, people will report stranger violence more often than violence committed by someone—the dynamic of our community is that everyone does know everyone, and there is a huge amount of stigma there. I think Sonya can speak more to it, but I would revise my statement to say that a statistically significant amount of violence is committed by people known to the victim.

What is important in our community is, when we're teaching children about stranger danger, we really want to re-look at that public education strategy, right? That's what this data—75% of violence is committed by someone known, across Canada. That's what StatsCan says. Here, it's 96%. There is something unique to our community that we need to be speaking to our children about.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: Sonya?

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: I was just going to say our centre was founded by Trent University because of, at that time, some rapes on campus by strangers. Certainly that is a part, and thank you for identifying that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final questions for you now are from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you for coming. It was a distance to come, and I just want to recognize and salute you, Lisa, as a survivor. It takes courage to be here. I'm going to say something; I'm going to check it out with you: It seems to me that you're to be commended for taking a very difficult experience for you and channelling that into solutions for other people. I think that's extremely laudable and you're to be congratulated.

Ms. Sonya Vellenga: We have plans to change the world.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: And everyone here salutes you for that. We're all trying to change the world in our own small way, but it's very powerful when someone has a lived experience and they do so, so congratulations.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: Thank you very much.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I think sometimes we forget, in the context of our own work.

Now my question. Sorry, Madam Chair, may I? Just a quick one.

You said something about mean girls, and not being there for each other. It made me think of the word "stigma." In mental health we're fighting some powerful stigmas now and we're changing that conversation. It sounds like we need to do the same thing here, in terms of highlighting the stigmas that are a consequence—you started by talking about a robbery in a convenience store and how the responses wouldn't be the same. We had a similar story earlier, so it's really a resonant theme.

Ms. Lisa Clarke: I can't quite understand this piece. Survivors who spoke to me—from survivors in university to survivors who were in their mid-fifties with book clubs—would not speak to their peer groups about the violence they experienced because there were conversations the groups were having shaming women, shaming how women dressed. I presented at a Soroptimist group and the first question was, "Well, this woman in my community, she was doing shots and she went home with him, and yeah, she passed out, but she deserved it." That was what I had to respond to, educating on the work that I'm doing. Some people there were like, "Did she even hear you?" But it's really that that stigma, that perception, is held by women as well as men. I'm not sure why, and something needs to be done for women to be better friends to women.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for making the journey here from Peterborough today to speak to this committee. We really value what you have said and shared with us. We invite you, if you wish, now to join our audience.

QUEEN'S SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE WORKING GROUP

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters this afternoon, Queen's Sexual Assault

Prevention and Response Working Group. If you could please come forward.

Ladies, have a seat. Make yourselves comfortable. Pour yourselves some water, if you like.

You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee this afternoon, and that will be followed by questions for you. Please begin by stating your names.

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Good afternoon. I'm Arig al Shaibah, and I'm the assistant dean of student affairs at Queen's University.

Ms. Doulton Wiltshire: Hi. I'm Doulton Wiltshire. I was the 2014-15 director of the Queen's Sexual Health Resource Centre, a student-run organization on campus, and a member of the working group.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Wonderful. I've prepared some remarks that I'd like to read in the interests of time.

I'm speaking to you today in my capacity as the chair of the Queen's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Working Group, which was established in the summer of 2013 to improve on the work that was being done on campus by taking a more strategic and collaborative campus-wide approach to addressing sexual assault prevention and response at Queen's.

I first want to express my thanks on behalf of Queen's for the opportunity to speak to the select committee to share what Queen's University has been doing as well as our plans to enhance and sustain efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence on campus.

We'd like to thank Premier Kathleen Wynne for leading the charge and calling the citizens of Ontario to action to end violence and harassment and for reinforcing the importance of focusing on post-secondary students, who are among the most vulnerable to such violence but also among the most potentially malleable with respect to influencing change in consciousness and behaviour at the individual and cultural levels, we believe.

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The Premier's action plan, It's Never Okay, we view as an endorsement of the work already being done by many institutions in this sector, while encouraging more or, in some cases, new efforts by others. The action plan builds on another provincial resource that was quite instrumental and a key guiding document to the Queen's working group, and that's Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario's Colleges and Universities.

The post-secondary education sector in Ontario, as you know, has long been engaged in campus sexual assault prevention and response efforts across Canada. For many years, institutional administrators, health and wellness practitioners, student affairs professionals and students have been discussing and acting on the identified needs for more effective prevention programming, more survivor-centric support services, more coordinated response mechanisms and more transparent reporting and complaint policies and procedures.

In the last year, the working group conducted an inventory of existing campus policies, protocols, programs,

systems and resources, and contrasted these with best practices. The initial inventory identified strengths and gaps at Queen's and was the departure point from which the working group launched a campus-wide consultation process that has led to a comprehensive report with recommendations to improve campus sexual violence prevention and response.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): May I ask you to back a little bit away from the microphone. We're having a popping sound.

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Oh, I see.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you hear that again, just lean back a little bit.

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Why don't I do this?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's even better. Good. Thank you.

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Great. It took a page and a half to get that.

I'd like to take this time to outline the working group's consultative and research process to highlight some of the recommendations from our soon-to-be-released report and to share information on Queen's next steps.

Recognizing the importance of student input and the fact that students on campus have been among the most active leaders on this subject, the working group, from its inception, has included an equal representation of students to faculty and staff.

In the fall of 2014, the working group established a policy subcommittee which drafted and released a well-received interim sexual assault response protocol to guide ongoing work on the development of a permanent, more stand-alone sexual assault policy.

Between February and April 2015, the working group collected campus community feedback across five inter-related domains for intervention. We asked about support services and response mechanisms, prevention initiatives, social and cultural climate policies and procedures, and accountability measures. Student voices figured prominently throughout the campus consultation process. Students represented 80% of the respondents—so we're at 850 students—to an online feedback survey. Key student groups and individual students participated in the focus groups and interviews, and students were the majority of participants at all four open meetings held on campus.

In addition to student feedback, the working group collected input from departments such as the gender studies department, from our counselling services staff and from key community partners such as the police services, sexual assault centre and the sexual assault and domestic violence unit locally.

During this time, the working group also conducted a comprehensive literature review and environmental scan, which included Canadian and US schools viewed to have exemplary components of prevention and response programs, services and policies.

The working group's consultative and research efforts have culminated in a comprehensive report, as I mentioned, which identifies 11 objectives and 34 recommen-

dations to enhance sexual violence prevention and response on campus. The recommendations proposed are in step, we're pleased to say, with all of the campus commitments and expectations outlined in the Premier's action plan. Among some of the recommendations I can highlight are:

- establishing a central, visible and welcoming sexual assault centre;

- raising the profile of all sexual support services on campus and in the community, including those that are available 24/7;

- clarifying and communicating the roles of various university personnel who are responsible for first response;

- incorporating training into existing requirements and opportunities for academic and non-academic departments;

- standardizing academic accommodations processes;

- broadly targeting our diverse student body with more effective prevention education programming, particularly focusing on first-year students in orientation week;

- maintaining the working group that we established in order to advise and continue to support progress on strategic actions;

- developing internal tracking mechanisms and complying, of course, with impending public reporting requirements; and

- developing a comprehensive, stand-alone sexual assault policy.

With respect to this last point, the policy subcommittee of the working group has already drafted a stand-alone policy and associated procedures which build on the interim report. This policy and its procedures are currently moving through the appropriate university channels for final approval.

The working group has also already set in motion plans to deliver bystander intervention training, a best practice prevention education strategy to key student leaders, as well as to deliver information about sexual assault and consent to all first-year students this coming fall.

The working group's report with its full recommendations has been submitted to Principal Danny Woolf, and it is expected to be released to the campus community and made public in coming days.

To conclude my remarks, I'd like to express how immensely helpful the Council of Ontario Universities reference group on sexual violence has been in examining sector-wide issues and best practices in the area of policy prevention and response. Queen's is fortunate to have a representative on this reference group: my dean—our vice-provost and dean of student affairs, Ann Tierney.

We look forward to continuing to receive sector-wide information and advice from the reference group to ensure continued alignment of our efforts with the Premier's action plan, compliance with forthcoming

provincial legislation, and of course we will meet any other government expectations.

Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that any student who experiences sexual assault is easily able to access and navigate campus and community support services and response options while we continue to strive to foster a violence-free campus environment.

Thank you for your time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first questions for you this afternoon are from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, Chair. I'd love a copy of your presentation if that could be available. Some of the recommendations you highlighted—I was trying to write them down quickly, but I didn't get them all. I'm looking forward to reading that report which you said is going to be released imminently.

Many of those initiatives that you have talked about that Queen's is going to be introducing—it sounds like they're going to require resources. Are you diverting resources from other areas of your budget? Do you have any recommendations about funding from the province to support these kinds of initiatives on campus? Can you talk to us a bit about that?

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Yes, absolutely. We would welcome, obviously, the opportunity to leverage any funds that can be made available from the government in whatever way that may look. I know that there are different forms of grants with respect to seed monies to help us. It's always helpful to be able to get monies to launch our pilot programs and then have the time to sort out how to sustain some of these programs. Then, of course, there may be other opportunities for longer-term funding, so obviously that's welcome.

We are committed to this issue; we have been for quite some time. Some things have been working, and we recognize that other things are not. The demographic is changing; the landscape is changing. So we continue with our process of evaluating the kinds of programs and interventions that we provide on campus. This issue will factor in in the same way.

We do have plans, at our next budget cycle, to think through: Do we need to shift resources? Do we need to look for different revenue-generating opportunities? Our donor base has been really great on some particular issues. This hasn't been an issue in the past that we've looked to donors for, but it's a possibility.

So yes, all of the above: looking at efficiencies and synergies; how we deliver programs to save costs, for instance; but certainly I think some of the recommendations are going to require a little bit of an infusion of monies. We're looking at how we can do that internally, but we'll also be looking externally for any assistance that way.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

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Mr. Han Dong: Thank you, Chair. I want to commend you on this report. I look forward to reading it. I

noticed you said that 80% of the—800-plus students responded. Were there any difficulties or barriers in data collection in your experience of writing this report?

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: No, I think we were pleased. We put out the survey to our 20,000 undergraduates and graduate students. We also put it out to our faculty and staff community complement. We had about 1,100 respondents, so we're happy with that response. It's a significant number of individuals who engaged in the process.

The interesting piece is that probably 70% of our respondents identified themselves as female. That's always an interesting piece. In this whole topic, we talk about engaging men at all different levels, so we're seeing it even at the level of providing feedback.

Mr. Han Dong: Good. I think it's very important to involve the community—because you said that you spent about two months in 2015 to get community feedback. That's very important, because a university needs to be supported by the community.

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Absolutely.

Mr. Han Dong: The other thing that you mentioned that I thought was interesting was clarifying the roles for first response. Can you elaborate on that? Are you looking for a formal role from the administration side? An unfortunate incident happens, and the question is, "Then what?" We've got to have a system to respond to it. Is it the student council side or the student union side or administration?

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: I'll let Doulton begin there and then I can pipe in.

Ms. Doulton Wiltshire: On the student side of things, because the university is a very large institution and because we know, with sexual violence, who you disclose to first can really be anyone, whether it's a TA, a don, or things like that: With everyone trying to provide a lot of support on campus, from the student side of things it wasn't clear where the best avenues for that support were. "Who do you seek out for reporting?" and, "Who do you seek out for accommodations?" was a huge piece that we heard over and over again from students.

There are a lot of patches here and there to get assistance in different areas. One of the major themes we saw was clarity and almost centralization so that on campus, if you're dealing with a sexual assault, you know immediately where to go for what type of support, or if somebody discloses a sexual assault to you, whether they're your friend or a student if you're a TA, no matter what role you're in, you know the best resources to send them to. That wasn't immediately clear in the university structure as it currently existed.

That's where that recommendation came out of, because we really felt it was important that anyone who needed those resources was getting the best side of that resource that they could that we could offer them at the time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from MPP McDonell.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Hello, and thanks for coming out today.

How well are your stats shared amongst, say, the various universities in Ontario but even in Canada? Do you have a feeling of, say, how sexual assaults are at Queen's versus other institutions?

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: This is one of the topics that I think the reference group is looking at in terms of sector-wide and answering that kind of question exactly. As far as I know, we typically don't look to compare statistics because of all the cautions around understanding some of the barriers to those statistics. I think it's an area that we're going to tackle first by looking at internal tracking mechanisms. That's one of our recommendations: an internal tracking mechanism to see how we can maintain confidentiality and anonymity for students while still gauging incidents on campus. From there, we can think about who else needs to know and how we should share this in a way that's helpful.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Yes. I was wondering because universities across Canada are unique, and some probably have better practices and better results. I was wondering: Is there co-operation to share those and to look at developing and in some way publishing best practices?

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Right. I know that the colleges are coming together to do that sort of thing. Again, I think the Council of Ontario Universities, at least in Ontario, is thinking about what we can learn from each other and how we can share best practices.

Mr. Jim McDonell: So your recommendations as you bring them in—will you be providing feedback on success, if it's measurable, or at least a subjective idea of whether they're working, or the good recommendations and ones that aren't?

Ms. Doulton Wiltshire: I think a big thing that we've been seeing as we go through is the—I don't want to say "demands"—call for action from the community and from Queen's to have those ongoing updates to understand what's being successful and what's not being successful.

I think the one great thing about the working group that has been putting together all these recommendations—and the recommendations include a lot of best practices at Queen's right now—is that this is information that we do want to share. We do think it's quite important, when we start looking at the Harvard model and other models that are being used, that those best practices have helped the work that we're doing and that we share whatever information we can as we move forward in implementing some of these recommendations on what they can do.

I know within the sexual health resource centre, our student group shares our best practices with all other student groups across Canada on a regular basis. It's how we get our phone lines working. It's how a group of 70 students can do a lot of the things that we do, because we share that. There was just a consent conference where we all came together to share our best practices. I think it's a common theme for people who are passionate in these areas that if we can share what we know and the best practices, that's how you learn and go forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, I want to thank you both very much for coming and appearing before this committee today, and sharing your insights with us on what is occurring on your campus.

Ms. Arig al Shaibah: Thank you very much.

KINGSTON FRONTENAC ANTI-VIOLENCE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our next presenters to come forward, with the Kingston Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Committee. Hello again. Have a seat. You know the drill: You will have up to 20 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

Ms. Lisa Fox: Sure. Lisa Fox.

Ms. Elayne Furoy: And Elayne Furoy.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And begin anytime.

Ms. Lisa Fox: Okay. I'm going to start. I'm going to talk about the Kingston Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Committee and give an overview of what that committee is. I am speaking as the past chair. I was the chair of the committee for about the last 10 years. I work at Kingston Interval House and have 14 years working in the violence-against-women sector.

In 1983, a small group of professionals and support service providers established the Coordinating Committee Against Domestic Assault on Women. They formalized their committee commitment to creating a comprehensive network of services for victims of partner abuse and their families. For the next 20 years—more than that now—representatives from the law enforcement and justice, shelter and housing, health, mental health, counselling and support sectors worked together to build effective, co-operative relationships; better understand one another's responsibilities and challenges; share information, resources and expertise; improve their understanding of the issue of partner abuse; and enhance the network of services available to victims of partner abuse and their families. Their efforts culminated in 2003 with the development of a Partner Abuse Protocol, outlining best practices for providing a collaborative response to victims of partner abuse.

In 2005, the coordinating committee expanded to include members working with victims and survivors of sexual violence. The name was officially changed to the Frontenac Domestic and Sexual Violence Council. This group evolved into the Kingston/Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Team and is now known as the Kingston Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Committee.

There was a strong belief at that point that it was really difficult to separate the issues of sexual violence and partner abuse. We're unique, I think, in some ways. I know, across the province, that has happened in some other jurisdictions. I think we were ahead of the game in incorporating that in our coordinating committee and

have made a solid commitment to the issues surrounding sexual violence and have made that part of our mandate.

Our beliefs: Our vision statement is, "We envision communities where all persons live safely, free from domestic and sexual violence."

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Our mandate: The Kingston Frontenac Anti-Violence Coordinating Committee contributes to the eradication of violence by promoting individual and community awareness of issues relating to domestic and sexual violence, and supporting a coordinated community response.

Member agencies involved with KFACC provide quality services to victims of domestic violence and/or sexual violence in accordance with the mandates, policies and procedures of their respective agencies.

Our committee consists of representatives from agencies providing services for victims of partner abuse and sexual violence, their families, and agencies that work with perpetrators. We include organizations working throughout the city of Kingston, Frontenac county and in some parts of Lennox and Addington county. Sectors represented in our committee include law enforcement and justice, shelter and housing, health and mental health, and counselling support. The different perspectives and expertise we each bring to KFACC enable us to develop a full understanding of the challenges, issues and priorities for our clients, our communities and one another.

We are dedicated volunteers working together to advance our common mandate to end violence. We have a multitude of agencies; I think, currently, we have about 35 agencies that sit on our coordinating committee.

I'll talk a little bit about some of the things that we have done in the past, and then I'll hand it over to Elaine.

Our mandate is to contribute to the eradication of violence by promoting individual and community awareness of issues relating to domestic and sexual violence, and to support a coordinated community response to these issues.

In fulfilling our mandate, we have assumed a leadership role in developing many important projects over the years. Some of the past and ongoing accomplishments include enhancing our network of services—we continue to support various projects, programs and other initiatives designed to strengthen the network of services for victims, perpetrators and their families. Examples include counselling for perpetrators of partner abuse; services for immigrant women; hospital-based services for victims; and the Neighbours, Friends and Family program. KFACC administers some initiatives directly and assists other organizations in securing resources in their own programs and services.

At that point, which was 2007-08, we were working on a big project around looking at the community establishing a one-stop shop, a collaborative service-delivery site for victims and survivors of partner abuse and sexual abuse. It was a lot of work. We hired a consultant at that point who did a lot of work. Again, I think it's unique,

when we look at providing services in that fashion, that it absolutely included domestic violence and sexual violence. We worked on that project for about two years. Again, there was a community coalition that worked, so some of those community partners sat on the coordinating committee; some didn't. At the end of it, we had a report. Unfortunately, we haven't moved to that model but, hopefully, at some point, this community can. We've already done a big bunch of work around the research to do that.

The other thing that we had during that project was a survivors' council. I have a strong belief personally—as well as, I think, can reflect the coordinating committee—that we need the voices and the expertise of women and children survivors who have actually navigated through the systems, to help us understand better how we can really collaborate and make things easier for them. The survivors' group at that point did a lot of work to help inform that project.

Some of the other things that we have done: In 2003, we developed and launched our Partner Abuse Protocol. In 2008, we launched our Sexual Assault Protocol. Again, both of those protocols sit under the coordinating committee. It was probably about two years ago that we gathered all the signatory partners of those two protocols, and we began to look at how we can make those living and breathing in our community. We committed to meeting with signatory partners once a year and we committed to revising it. It was revised and relaunched publicly last May with a commitment to do ongoing training. Some of that training has already started. Recently, we've done that.

Some of the other work that the coordinating committee has done: We've done a Youth Dating Violence Project. It was a web-based resource for information for youth on dating violence, services available, safety information. We did a Healthy Relationship Video Contest. Again, there is a strong commitment from the coordinating committee around the prevention piece and definitely looking at younger elementary school or high school age. This program, the Healthy Relationship Video Contest, was aimed at secondary students. It was awesome. It certainly included sexual violence, as well as power and control issues and healthy relationships.

We've done multi-sectoral training. KFACC has organized half- and full-day training sessions. Topics presented recently include legal issues relating to partner abuse, options for creating a local one-stop collaborative service delivery site, and Dave Franklin's workshop on relationship terrorism.

The protocol committee, after the launch and some of the training they're currently looking at doing online—again, a strong commitment from the coordinating committee around those protocols and really what's at the essence of the protocols in terms of best practice and really what collaboration means. There is a commitment to ongoing training. As we find out over and over again when we all sit around a table, we don't really know what everybody does. So it's a great opportunity to

network and find out what people's roles are and what their mandates are and how best we can work together. The committee has also endorsed and supported initiatives, including Don't Be That Guy and Un-Blurred Lines.

I think that's all I had.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We have some questions for you now, beginning with our Liberal caucus and MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. I guess, very quickly, Don't Be That Guy: What is that? What is the Don't Be That Guy program?

Ms. Elayne Furoy: Basically, it's a prevention campaign that was aimed—one of the criticisms of a lot of messaging out there when we're looking at trying to prevent sexual violence is aimed towards people who experience sexual violence. We have to be very careful about that. It sends the wrong message; right? It actually is a form of victim blaming. So when we say to people, "Be careful. Don't send naked photos of yourself over the Internet because then you'll be a victim"—we really want to kind of steer away.

Don't Be That Guy is a very successful campaign basically where the messaging was toward young men, potential perpetrators, by saying, "You help a girl into the cab and she's really drunk. Do you take advantage of that, or do you assist her?" It's kind of trying to point that out, to say, "Don't be that guy."

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Sorry, I just wanted to—you caught me off-guard when you were saying it. I was asking my colleague.

Thank you very much. I have to say, lots of projects that you've tackled in the past few years, so congratulations for all that work. I guess I have a question in terms of, what would be some of the best practices for treatment and support that should be adopted and you could recommend to us?

Ms. Lisa Fox: We certainly like to use our protocols, so we have the specific Partner Abuse Protocol and the Sexual Assault Protocol. In essence, some of the guiding principles and the beliefs of those two documents are what I would consider sort of the best practices, because it really gets at how we treat people who might walk through the door in terms of receiving services. We all will come from our own perspective in terms of our agencies and what our mandates are, but this is around the essence of really working collaboratively together.

1400

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We're going to move on—you can have a conversation after—in the interest of staying on time. Our next MPP to question you will be MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much. One of the things that we've heard about often is integration and coordination. I think you mentioned that you were working for a couple of years on a one-stop-shop delivery model, but you haven't been successful. It sounded like you've spent a couple of years trying to put that together but it hasn't come off the ground. Maybe if you could

just explain what the hurdles have been in getting that off the ground.

Ms. Lisa Fox: Money.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Money.

Ms. Elayne Furoy: Also, too, I would say, domestic violence is under a different funding stream. DV is under MCSS, whereas sexual violence falls under victims of crime, and so that's under the Attorney General. It's very difficult, from a government perspective, to get those different pots of money to basically collaborate and come together. That's one of the barriers.

Mr. Randy Hillier: So one of the hurdles here is funding from different ministries to get into that integrated, coordinated approach?

Ms. Lisa Fox: Yes. There was, philosophically, a strong commitment and a strong buy-in from all the community agencies. The report that was done actually spells out how much it would cost per square foot of the building, including all the things that would come with that, so it was a very comprehensive report that was done. But again, I think it's a shift because it would mean placing a person, a resource, into another office, so it would look different. I think it's a shift in how people do work currently with that model.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I'm going to assume that you've got a model and a framework created for this one-stop delivery service, and I'm just wondering if you might be able to share that with this committee as well so we can take a look at that and whatever other information might be pertinent to it, for us to look at.

Ms. Lisa Fox: Sure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. I come from London, which is a community that also evolved from a domestic violence coordinating committee to the coordinating committee to end woman abuse. I appreciate very much the work that you're doing in this community.

Earlier this week we had a presentation in Windsor about some best practices in prevention and they talked about some fundamentals. Single-gender-focused programs tend to be more effective. It sounds like you're doing that with Don't Be That Guy. It sounds like that is directed at male audiences.

I wondered if you've also found that in the evaluation of the other kinds of programs that you're doing, around youth dating violence and healthy relationships. Is that something that you have found in your work?

Ms. Elayne Furoy: I think when some research was done around prevention, as you heard from Rebecca and Bailey first thing this morning, the results are mixed. It is an area that has been under-researched. Definitely there is value in having gender-specific prevention and education, and there's also value in having blanket messaging for everybody. It just depends on what the outcome is that you're focusing on. But I would say that the jury is kind of out on that.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So you try to provide a mix of both.

Ms. Elayne Furoy: Yes.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. And then your survivors' group: I was interested in hearing more about the role of the survivors' group. Are they involved in program development or is it feedback on programs as they're being implemented? What's their role?

Ms. Lisa Fox: When we worked on the collaborative service delivery site, it was instrumental. They were informing that working group at that time. The survivors' group at that point, when that project concluded, continued on for about a year.

More recently, last year—we've got a new survivors' group. The previous survivors' group didn't have leadership connected with it, so we re-established a survivors' group last year, and they are currently in the planning stages of what they want to do. Again, there is a strong commitment between the coordinating committee and the survivors' group that they will work together and collaboratively. They did, actually, come speak to the protocol training and did presentations there. Again, the importance of that is huge.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, ladies, for coming in and chatting with us today and sharing your information. We very much appreciate it. We invite you now, if you wish, to join the audience.

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY AND LEGAL CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter this afternoon, with the Community Advocacy and Legal Centre. Good afternoon. Please make yourself comfortable. Have a glass of water if you like.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Yes, please.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You will have up to 20 minutes to speak to our committee today, and that will be followed by questions for you.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): For the record, please start by stating your name and the name of your organization.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Sharon Powell, Community Advocacy and Legal Centre.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sharon, I'm just going to ask that you lean back a little bit when you hear a popping sound. Our audio is very strong today.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin any time.

Ms. Sharon Powell: I've had my pamphlet passed around for our legal centre. Just a brief overview: We're a non-profit community legal clinic, and we provide free legal services to low-income residents of Hastings, Prince Edward and Lennox and Addington counties. We're staffed by lawyers, community legal workers, and support staff. We're funded by legal aid, and we have a volunteer board of directors. "Community legal worker"

is a term within the clinic system. Most community legal workers are now licensed paralegals, since the law society has started licensing.

My role within the legal clinic system is as a paralegal/community legal worker. My primary role within my clinic is Criminal Injuries Compensation Board claims. Our case-selection criteria for that is people who have been the victims of childhood abuse or domestic or sexual assault. I would be happy to do an overview of criminal injuries compensation if that's required. If people are familiar with the program, I won't. I'll leave that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you have added information you wish to leave with us, we're happy to receive anything you have.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Okay. I haven't brought written materials on it. I just wasn't sure if the committee members were familiar with the compensation board scheme.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You can forward it to our Clerk. You have his email address.

Ms. Sharon Powell: All right. Thank you.

One of the things that we have done within the clinic system is start a study group with Criminal Injuries Compensation Board people who do that work. We meet quarterly and we discuss concerns and best practices. The submission that has been passed around to everyone is from that group, done by Deirdre McDade, a staff lawyer at my clinic, and myself, with contributions from members of the group. What we're looking at is that, because the government is looking at changing some of the aspects of the victims of crime act, we're asking them to open the legislation and review it, as it hasn't been done since November 1986.

We totally support the time limitation period that the government has put forward for victims of sexual assault, but we're also asking that that be extended to victims of childhood abuse and domestic violence, as they are also severely traumatized by what's happened to them. Very often those forms of abuse also include sexual violence.

We feel that the most egregious aspect of the current practice of the board is offender notification. Any time there has not been a conviction of an offender, the offender will be notified that the victim is bringing a claim against them. That does stop many victims from proceeding with claims, because they're afraid to face the offender. The board does not tell the offender where the victim resides, but we're in a small community where often the offenders know where the people reside or people know who their offenders are, so they're aware of where they live.

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It's really not practicable, usually, for the victims to sue the offenders in civil court, because the people that we work with are on a low income. It prejudices people who know their offenders, as claims can go ahead even if the offender is unknown or deceased. Anyone who knows their offender is going to have to say where they are, and the board will notify that person.

Also, there's a subrogation issue, and the board hasn't pursued subrogation in some time. That was one of the

recommendations by Justice Roy McMurtry and which is in the submissions on page 3. One of the things that he recommended was that offenders not be notified of the applications by victims. A way around that is to get rid of the subrogation aspect.

Other aspects that we think are worth looking at are the amount of the awards—which hasn't been changed since 1986—and the board making a decision on a claimant's capacity, which then puts the awards into trust and puts it forward to the Public Guardian and Trustee.

Our primary recommendations, on the last page of our submission, are about eliminating the provision on subrogation, waiving notification of offenders in cases of sexual assault, domestic violence and childhood abuse; and eliminating the limitation period for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and childhood abuse.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ready for questions?

Ms. Sharon Powell: Yes, I am. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our first questions for you are from MPP Hillier.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Hello. How are you?

Mr. Randy Hillier: How are you today? I just wanted to get a little bit more clarification on some of these items that you brought up. The first one is the offender notification?

Ms. Sharon Powell: Yes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: In your notes here, you say that before 2008, the injuries compensation board would waive offender notification.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Very liberally, yes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes. I assume that they made that change to address a problem that they recognized.

Ms. Sharon Powell: It says in the legislation that they shall serve the offender where practicable, and it was waived, very liberally, if we provided submissions or an affidavit from the victim, saying that they felt they were in jeopardy if the offender was notified.

There was a change of chair at the board level, and the new chair at that time took the position that the offenders had the right to know, unless there was a criminal conviction.

Mr. Randy Hillier: When there is an award from the criminal injuries board—my understanding of it is it's paid out from the criminal injuries compensation award.

Ms. Sharon Powell: That's right, yes.

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's not paid by the offender in any fashion.

Ms. Sharon Powell: No, it is not. No.

Mr. Randy Hillier: What would be the purpose or value in having the offender at one of these—

Ms. Sharon Powell: At the hearing? We don't see any purpose or value ourselves. The board does have the right to subrogation, but they don't pursue it.

The purpose or value is that the person has the right to defend themselves, if they choose to, and question what the victim is saying about them. However, it's a balance of probabilities. It's not "beyond a reasonable doubt" as the burden of proof.

Mr. Randy Hillier: But there could be no further charges that come forward against the offender.

Ms. Sharon Powell: That's correct.

Mr. Randy Hillier: So, actually, the person would not be defending themselves in any fashion—

Ms. Sharon Powell: I totally agree with where you're going with that. That's part of our point: It does not result in criminal charges against the offender. It doesn't prejudice their reputation, because there's a publication ban on decisions involving childhood abuse, domestic or sexual assault.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Maybe if you could just give us what the existing time frames are with the CICB claims for victims of sexual assault.

Ms. Sharon Powell: How long it takes?

Mr. Randy Hillier: From my understanding, there is, for lack of a better word, a statute of limitations on it.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Yes. It's a two-year time limitation from the last date of violence, or two years from when a person turns 18 if it has been childhood abuse.

You can ask for an extension. The main reason that people need an extension is because they don't know about the program. They normally don't know it is in existence. The board has recently—in the last few years, they have been very liberal in granting extensions. Certainly, before that, we went through a period where, with historical abuse, it was very difficult to get an extension.

Mr. Randy Hillier: So there is a proposal now to extend it beyond two years? And what would that extension be?

Ms. Sharon Powell: Not to extend it beyond two years, but in the action plan that the provincial government has put forward, it would be that they would eliminate that two-year time limitation for victims of sexual assault. We totally agree with that and we're asking that it be expanded to victims of childhood and domestic.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, thank you very much. This has been a very sort of sink-or-swim experience for me in trying to get up to speed on some of these legal terms.

Can you just go over subrogation and what the implications are of including that provision, and of eliminating that provision, which is what you're recommending?

Ms. Sharon Powell: Right. What it means is that the board—say they award a person \$10,000 for pain and suffering. Then the board can go after the offender for the \$10,000 and sue them to get the money back.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So that's the current practice?

Ms. Sharon Powell: That's the subrogation, but they don't exercise that right.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Oh, they never go after the offender to get the money back?

Ms. Sharon Powell: To the best of my knowledge, and in the submissions—Justice McMurtry did a very thorough review of the system after there was an Ombudsman report about criminal injuries compensation. He said that they haven't pursued it in over a decade. It's

not usually worth their while for the time that it takes, and if the offenders don't have money, there's no point.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Right. And the benefit of eliminating that provision—

Ms. Sharon Powell: —the subrogation, is that then they won't have to be notified; there's no reason for them to be notified, because the money will never come from the offender.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. So those two recommendations are linked, then.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Yes. Correct.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you so much for your presentation.

We've spoken to a number of survivors over the last couple of weeks in the opportunities that we've had here. A lot of them have talked about how difficult it is to find the right supports and to find what they're looking for, especially as victims, and how hard it is for them.

I was just wondering: What do you think prevents survivors from coming in to seek help from you and from your organization?

Ms. Sharon Powell: In terms of criminal injuries compensation?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: More—

Ms. Sharon Powell: My organization doesn't—we're not counsellors and we don't provide that level of support.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: But the legal support.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Yes. So we're legal support. We screen many of our clients for violence, and that's how we get a lot of clients for criminal injuries compensation. We get a lot of referrals from the local agencies. I'm also an active member on the coordinating committee in my community, which is similar to the committee that you just heard about in Kingston. There's a coordinating committee in the Quinte area that we network monthly, and so they would refer people to me and vice versa.

I hope that answered your question.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Somewhat. Thank you.

Ms. Sharon Powell: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Sharon Powell. We appreciate your coming and appearing before this committee today and sharing your information.

Committee members, you'll see on your list that our next presenter is going to be reached by teleconference. However, we've been told that she's not available, at the earliest, until 2:45. As you can see, we're a little bit ahead of schedule, so we're going to stand in recess until 2:45. I look forward to seeing you then.

The committee recessed from 1418 to 1456.

MS. JOY SMITH

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now con-

tinue. I believe we have Joy Smith, MP, on the telephone. Joy, are you there? Hello?

Ms. Joy Smith: Hello.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Hello, Joy. Can you hear us?

Ms. Joy Smith: Yes, I can. Who am I speaking to?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Joy, this is Daiene Vernile. I'm Chair of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment. Before we get started, we're actually going to go around and have everybody tell you who they are so that you know to whom you're speaking today. We'll start on my left.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Hi, Joy. It's Laurie Scott. Thank you for being willing to appear before committee. I had asked Joy. So, Joy, I was the contact, and I will leave it at that. You know enough about me.

Ms. Joy Smith: Yes, I do know Laurie. Thank you so much for the invitation.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you.

Mr. Randy Hillier: It's Randy Hillier, one of Laurie's colleagues.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Jim McDonell, also one of Laurie's colleagues.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Hi, Joy. Taras Natyshak, MPP for Essex.

Ms. Joy Smith: Nice to meet you, Taras.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: You too, Joy.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Hi, Joy. Peggy Sattler, MPP for London West. Taras and I are both NDP members of this committee.

Ms. Joy Smith: Yes. I actually have you on my list here. I know who you are. Glad to talk to you.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Me, too.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi, Joy. It's Eleanor McMahon. I'm the MPP for Burlington.

Ms. Joy Smith: Nice to meet you.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Nice to meet you.

Ms. Marie-France Lalonde: Hi. It's Marie-France Lalonde, MPP for Ottawa-Orléans.

Ms. Joy Smith: Lovely to meet you as well.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Sophie Kiwala, MPP for Kingston and the Islands.

Ms. Joy Smith: Wonderful. Nice to meet you.

Mr. Han Dong: Good afternoon, Joy. It's Han Dong from Trinity-Spadina in Toronto.

Ms. Joy Smith: Nice to meet you. You're there as well. Good. That's great.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So now we've gone around and it's back to me: Daiene.

Joy, you will have 20 minutes to speak to our committee and it will be followed by questions for you. Please begin any time.

Ms. Joy Smith: Okay. I will begin right now. I know I'm presenting to the Ontario Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment. I'm Joy Smith, member of Parliament from Kildonan-St. Paul. Thank you to you all for inviting me to testify. I have to say that I've been working on the human trafficking and the violence-against-women file for a very, very long time. I was a

former member of the Manitoba Legislature, and my son was in the integrated child exploitation unit and the child abuse unit as a cop. Having said that, he taught me about what was happening in our country, and I started working with the victims. That was about 17 years ago. Unfortunately, I got to know a great deal about human trafficking and what it was in this country.

Subsequently, I passed two bills, Bill C-268, mandatory minimums for traffickers of children 18 years and under. It's in the Criminal Code, as we speak. It did make Canadian history as the 15th private member's bill that amended the Criminal Code since Confederation. The other one was Bill C-310, and that's when we reached the long arm of the Canadian law when permanent residents or Canadian citizens go abroad and traffic or exploit others in countries that have weak judicial systems, weak police forces. We now can bring them back to Canada and we can try them here.

I thank you for having me come to your committee today and I'm hoping it's somewhat useful to you. I also wrote *Connecting the Dots*, a proposal for a national action plan against human traffickers. Our government did adopt that action plan and we do have the government action plan as a result of that.

Anyway, when we talk about human trafficking, I understand that you're studying the prevention of sexual violence and harassment—and to improve your response to Ontarians who have experienced sexual violence and harassment. I'll be focusing my remarks this afternoon on the issue of preventing sex trafficking, which is a particularly heinous form of sexual violence. Primary venues of sex trafficking are prostitution, massage parlours and strip clubs, and I will share with you the information that I have gathered and end with recommendations.

Sex trafficking impacts many women and young girls, but also some boys and men, particularly boys in the last five years. According to a Criminal Intelligence Service Canada report on organized crime, several street gangs are especially active with the domestic sex-trafficking market. These groups facilitate the recruitment, the control, the movement and the exploitation of Canadian-born females in the domestic sex trade, primarily in strip bars in several cities across the country.

A number of organized crime syndicates and family-based networks recruit girls to trafficking inter- and intra-provincially, so New Brunswick to Montreal to Toronto to Niagara. Middle-class females between the ages of 12 to 25 are recruited by male peers posing as their boy-friends. Victims are controlled by direct rape and assault and indirect threatening, like to family—all sorts of forms of coercion. The daily earnings, ladies and gentlemen, of one victim can range between \$300 to \$1,500 a day. A single Canadian victim of sex trafficking is worth approximately \$280,000 on the market today per year to her exploiter or to her trafficker. Human traffickers can be males or females and are called madams or pimps sometimes. It's not about sex, actually; it's all about the money. They earn a great deal of money off very innocent victims.

The process that they go through is recruitment and isolation, control and exploitation. I just had a case this past weekend—I was very busy this long weekend—of a young girl who was lured by the traffickers over the Internet. It's the same MO. They persuaded her to disrobe and took inappropriate pictures. They were going to meet her at a certain place. The traffickers were much older than she was. This particular young lady was 16 years old. Fortunately, her mom and dad interceded and intercepted what was going on.

We were able to trace those traffickers down to Texas because often they recruit in Canada. Most of the trafficking happens between the US and Canada and Canada and the US, although I've worked with victims from Hungary, from Ukraine, from Israel—from different countries across the globe.

Ontario has had a number of human trafficking cases. Very recently, in January, as you know, a trafficker was arrested after a 17-year-old girl was forced into the sex trade, beaten, choked and threatened. Again, in February, Hamilton police rescued a 16-year-old girl being trafficked in the sex trade and charged her 18-year-old trafficker. In March, in Toronto, police rescued a 14-year-old girl being sold for sex by three women. In April—this is just giving you examples. There are so many of them, but I want to bring it home to you because I really applaud you for what you're doing in Ontario. Ontario is very active, as are all the other provinces in Canada. In April, just a couple of months ago, RCMP investigations in Toronto and Montreal resulted in the arrest of an international human trafficking crime ring that had brought up to 500 young women to Canada from Asia. You probably read about it in the newspapers. There are more and more articles in the newspapers that are talking about what is really happening.

As you're looking for ways to prevent sexual violence, it's important to recognize the prevalence of violence within prostitution, where many victims of sex trafficking are exploited.

I just want to stop for a minute and see if you can hear me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, we can hear you quite well.

Ms. Joy Smith: Okay; great.

I know that you've heard from survivors like Katarina MacLeod and Casandra Diamond. They're amazing women. I've worked with them for quite a long time. They're wonderful, wonderful women who are survivors. It's so critical that you hear from survivors, because these are the ones that can provide some of the most important recommendations on preventing future sexual violence.

Let's be clear: Prostitution is not the world's oldest profession. It's the world's oldest form of oppression. Prostitution does exploit women, youth and vulnerable populations. It escalates gender inequalities by turning women into a commodity to be bought, sold, rented and exploited. Prostitution provides an avenue for abuse and violence.

I call out prostitution because they call it the age-old industry. It's actually human trafficking because if you

look at the backstory behind what happened to these so-called prostitutes: They were targeted, they were lured and they were forced into the sex trade or persuaded to go into the sex trade without realizing what was happening, and somebody else was getting all their money.

In a Canadian study on women and prostitution from Vancouver's downtown east side—and I've done extensive work down there—100 women were interviewed. They were aboriginal women; they represented 52% of the women down there on the east side being trafficked in the act of prostitution. Almost 75% of Canadian women experienced stabbings, beatings, concussions and broken bones. It really isn't the *Pretty Woman* scenario that was put on the movie screen; it was just exactly the opposite. Some 50% of the women experienced serious head injuries. They were attacked with baseball bats and crowbars. It's just a horrible existence for these women who are so controlled by their traffickers.

I think Ontario's approach must recognize that prostitution as a result of trafficking is not just violence but itself is a form of violence. This is a position that has been adopted across political lines here in Canada. As you know, in the 2006 report of the national Standing Committee on the Status of Women, which I was a part of, called *Turning Outrage into Action*—I was the vice-chair of that particular committee. We adopted the position from that Status of Women document—after hearing the majority of witnesses before us, we came to the conclusion that prostitution was closely linked to trafficking in persons. We believed—that particular committee—that prostitution is a form of violence and a violation of human rights. The committee as a whole felt that prostitutes' consent is irrelevant because you never consent to sexual exploitation.

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Another issue in Ontario that I've been very aware of and one that is of great concern to me is the number of vulnerable youth being lured into prostitution. As you know, in 2013, the RCMP report *Domestic Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in Canada* revealed alarming trends among the trafficking of youth. If you read that report—which I don't have time to go over right now because I know I only have about five more minutes. I want to make sure that you draw attention to that report because you'll see that youth in group homes and foster care are highly at risk of traffickers luring them and trafficking them on the street. It also reveals the message used by traffickers to recruit vulnerable youth. Really, they gain their trust, to make a long story short. If you read that particular document, it is well documented.

Another study highlighted by a literature review by the Canadian Women's Foundation—you should really get this wonderful study they did on trafficking in persons. I think it was \$2.2 million they spent on a year's study. The study itself is incredible. A lot of those victims in that study I recognized and worked with over the years. In that study, it found that aboriginal youth were found to make up one third to one half of the sexually exploited participants. Foster care and group homes were the first

site of sexual exploitation. So that's an issue that really has to be addressed.

In the National Task Force on Sex Trafficking of Women and Girls in Canada in 2014, members of the task force met 160 women and girls who had been trafficked. Many had been first trafficked as a young teenager, typically at age 13 or 14. A lot of them are from middle-class homes with parents who cared for them. I've worked with a lot of victims. Everybody thinks it's aboriginals, street kids, whatever; it's not. It's any young person who is vulnerable.

Having said that, the evidence is there—the empirical evidence—the studies are there right now for you to work from. I would like to make a few recommendations, if I could.

First, I think that this committee should recommend that the Ontario Legislature adopt MPP Laurie Scott's private member's motion on a provincial task force to combat human trafficking. I really like that motion. It's an important first step. I can't begin to express how important it is to have a collaborative approach that brings key stakeholders to target sex trafficking and to head it off in Ontario here. I just, again, have to commend MPP Scott for putting forward this motion. I've never met Laurie, but I read her speech and read what she said. This is groundbreaking—what you're doing on this committee here in Ontario—and I thank you all for that. If it passes and is acted on by the Ontario government, it'll be a significant step forward.

Secondly, I'd like to recommend that any effort to combat sexual violence include targeted measures to vulnerable youth, especially those in group homes. There needs to be more training and education for group home staff and social workers etc.—and police officers as well.

Third, I would recommend that the committee consider legislative changes to better protect victims of human trafficking. For example, my home province of Manitoba has enshrined certain protections into law. Manitoba's *Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act* became law on April 30, 2012. It's not about what political party did what—actually, our province is NDP; it's about everybody working together to stop this heinous crime against vulnerable youth.

Fourth, I'd like to recognize that in 2011 the Ontario government took a few encouraging steps to target human trafficking, including the development of a crisis line and funding for organizations assisting victims, and establishing a human trafficking advisory committee. I've been watching this very closely. These are great steps, and you have great police forces who are becoming trained and doing some really good work. But, unfortunately, Ontario still lags behind some other provinces in anti-human-trafficking efforts. I believe that Ontario needs an action plan to combat human trafficking with measurable goals, and it needs to increase funding for organizations supporting human trafficking victims. The \$650,000 that is available right now is nowhere near enough to support non-governmental organizations.

I believe Ontario also needs to prioritize tackling the demand for prostitution. This means supporting the ban

on purchasing sex and advertising sexual services. There are excellent police forces in Ontario—out of Toronto, Peel, Durham and Halton, to name a few—who are targeting the johns, and they need the full support of the Ontario government. In this regard, public education, in my view, is imperative, because it informs people about the links between sex trafficking and youth sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

So I think these are some very, very important steps, and I've been watching very closely because I'm just thrilled to know that this committee has tackled this very important topic. I just want to thank you for that.

I know that my time is pretty well up now, but I'm hoping I've touched on some things that might be of some use to you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Joy. This is Daiene again. I've got good news for you: That motion by MPP Scott on trafficking was unanimously adopted by the Ontario Legislature.

Ms. Joy Smith: Wonderful. That is great.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just leave it up the government to enforce it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Of course.

Ms. Joy Smith: What date did that happen?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): This was a few days ago, so last Thursday.

Ms. Joy Smith: Oh. I've been kind of busy this long weekend.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our very first questions for you are going to come from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Joy Smith: Go ahead.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, Joy, for taking the time to present to this committee. You talked about foster care settings and group homes often being the preferred location for traffickers to recruit victims, and also recommended targeted measures for vulnerable youth, especially those who are in group homes.

You mentioned training for group home staff. Are there other targeted measures? Is there legislative change that should be considered? Do you have anything else in mind as to what would be an effective targeted measure to address the issue of recruitment through foster care and group homes?

Ms. Joy Smith: I don't want to give a wrong impression that that's the only place that youth are targeted. It's not. It's anywhere. I've had kids in school set up a schoolmate and sell them to the traffickers and get their way paid through university—upper-middle-class Canada, I'm talking about.

Group homes and foster care are particularly vulnerable places where I think some—education is our greatest weapon, and I think people don't realize how traffickers work. How traffickers work is they come on as the victim's friend. They don't come on as bad guys or bad women. They try to gain their trust. The second step they do is, they try to separate them from their support systems, and that could be group homes, schools, churches, family—just separate them. And once they've separated, what they do is they get their identification

somehow. Youth should be told: Don't give your identification to anyone.

When they gain their trust, often they become a very close friend or a so-called boyfriend. I don't want any of the kids to get paranoid or things like that, but when someone starts asking for your identification, it's time to put the red flags up. When someone wants to separate you from everything you know—your family, your comforts—there's a problem there.

I had, this weekend, a young girl lured over the Internet. She got to a point where she totally trusted a person who she'd never, in her whole life, met. The reason why they go after underage kids is because they're easy to influence; they're easy to manipulate. They give them experiences and they give them promises, and if they meet them, they start to groom them very nicely by giving them dinners out, flowers—things that young kids normally, at that age, don't experience. So they gain their trust and I think that wherever they are—group homes, in schools, whatever—I just am particularly concerned about group homes because I do think that, from what I can tell and from what I've seen across Canada, that is one place where they do circle the wagons and try to get the young people inside.

1520

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Kiwala.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you so much, Joy—

Ms. Joy Smith: I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you so much, Joy, for your comments and your most interesting perspective on human trafficking. I appreciate what you've brought to this committee.

I'm wondering if you can provide some information for us, more with respect to sexual violence and harassment, on what the major trends are—or perhaps the top two or three—that you can identify that are of most concern to you, and what can this province learn from your perspective?

Ms. Joy Smith: You know, that is such a good question. Thank you so much. I look at two things—because I just met with some top women executives—and talk about harassment in the lofty halls of top corporations. A lot of women CEOs are enduring those comments. One lady, a couple of weeks ago, was telling me that they made a comment, "Oh, you know, you're so good. You get paid. You just lay on your back, and you get all the money you want," like that kind of stuff.

I think in our schools and in our communities, we have to not laugh at those kinds of things. We have to discuss the environment we're setting for young women where people think that's funny. It's not funny, because that does happen to some people. The fact of the matter is, it sets an environment for sexual harassment being a common, ordinary thing.

And it's not only men; it's women, too. I know I was sitting in a circle of parliamentary people, and I have to tell you—no names will be said at this committee—there were men and women there, and they had great guffaws

about the prostitutes. I just went up to them and said, "You know what? After what we've been studying and what you know, I find that this just turns my stomach."

I thought they wouldn't speak to me ever again, because this was on a Friday. They were in the Maple Leaf room in Air Canada—and I'm not talking about parties. I'm talking about a whole group of parliamentarians, mixed parties. They were just having a couple of drinks and sitting, waiting for the plane. I thought no one would be speaking to me on Monday. Guess what? Everybody acted like nothing had happened.

You know, people never speak up. When you talk about sexual harassment and that kind of stuff, we have accepted it as a community. Earlier this year, *Fifty Shades of Grey*—I spoke out against it and very strongly, because, sorry, violence against women—I called it "Fifty shades of violence."

Anybody can do anything they want in this country, but it has got to a point—when it hurts somebody else, that's not on. When women are disrespected or men are disrespected, I think we have to set up an environment in our country of dignity and respect for all people. When we start accepting this kind of thing and thinking it's funny and it's the joke of the day, it's pretty sad.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Thank you.

Ms. Joy Smith: I think that's a really good prelude to stopping sexual harassment.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Our final question for you this afternoon is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Joy, I can't thank you enough for all the work that you've done for so long. If you don't know at the table, Joy is retiring this year and donating her full-time work to her foundation, the Joy Smith Foundation, helping exploited women.

Ms. Joy Smith: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I guess, Joy, you can expand, but I just want to say that's very noble, and we can't commend you enough for your dedication to this.

There are a hundred questions, and maybe someday I will get to meet you, I hope.

Ms. Joy Smith: I hope so too.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I know Manitoba does some things differently, and I wondered if you could expand—you touched upon them lightly—either from supporting victims, because we know there are crucial time periods in which you can help these young women. How do you do it differently in Manitoba than in Ontario?

Then the other part, that somewhat you've addressed, is making people more aware of the extent of the problem. We've got incredible coverage, I have to say, since last Thursday, and I'm encouraged that maybe the government will certainly bring this forward. You had success with private members' bills. We all support the motion to deal with human trafficking. But if you could touch on those two areas quickly, on what you might do differently in Manitoba, and the public awareness. Thank you.

Ms. Joy Smith: Thank you. First of all, I think what is so profound is that the provincial government—which, as

I said, is an NDP government; I'm Conservative. I said, "You know, we have to work together. It's not about what political parties are."

They put forth Manitoba's Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act. It became law on April 30, 2012. What this law did was create a protection order for victims of human trafficking or child sexual exploitation, which does offer protection to victims by requiring the respondent—that's the person you want to be protected from, the human trafficker or the exploiter—to stay away from the victims.

This law also allows a victim of human trafficking to sue the trafficker for money. That's a first. When it hits their pocketbooks—because it's all about money. They make so much money off of these innocent victims, and now the victims have become survivors. When you listen to Katarina and Casandra, I could give you 300 such young women—more than that—and the story is always the same. No one looked at them as a victim; they looked at them initially as a bad girl and they were disrespected or whatever.

Education is our greatest weapon. The backstory to how traffickers work, the backstory to how they're controlled—they have to smile. They have to do as they're told. If they don't, and if they don't hand over their money, they get beaten or worse: They do not live through the experience. There are many girls who have disappeared and gone because, you know, they're easily disposable.

Disposable people are not what Canada is supposed to be about. It's supposed to be enhancing and providing programs for victims of human trafficking and victims who have been exploited, to restart their lives. I think the story is getting out in Canada now, because education is our greatest weapon. The story is getting out that human trafficking is very prevalent here in our country, and that's not what we stand for in Canada. Canadians are the True North, strong and free, and we stand by that.

But to do that, to make that happen, we need to hear the stories of the survivors who came out of it, and people like yourselves who stood beside them. To downplay the fact—there's nothing good about prostitution. There is nothing good. I have seen so many trafficked victims, and they're called prostitutes—and I'm thinking to myself, "How did they become where they are right now?" They became where they were because somebody targeted them, lured them, took away everything they had, and they thought the only thing they had was survival—that is, continuing to service men—or women; it happens with young boys as well more and more, which I find very alarming, these last five years.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Joy Smith, we'd like to thank you very much for your information this afternoon. We really appreciate this conversation with you.

Ms. Joy Smith: My pleasure.

TIMMINS AND AREA WOMEN IN CRISIS

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Committee members, we're now going to be calling our next presenter.

It's also going to be a teleconference. We only have one line, so we had to say goodbye to Joy, and we're now going to be calling Julie DeMarchi.

Good afternoon, Julie.

1530

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Hello. How are you?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good. How are you?

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: I'm fantastic.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Julie, tell me how to say your last name.

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: DeMarchi.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): DeMarchi. Okay.

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: A little Italian.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. Very nice. Julie, you are being heard right now by 10 Ontario MPPs, who are sitting around a table. I'm just going to read their names quickly to you and we'll get started.

We have MPPs Sattler, Natyshak, McDonnell, Hillier, Scott, McMahon, Lalonde, Kiwala, Malhi and Dong. My name is Daiene Vernile, and I'm the Chair of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment.

Julie, you will have 20 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you.

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Okay, great.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin any time.

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Fantastic. My name is Julie DeMarchi. I'm the executive director here at the Timmins and Area Women in Crisis, also known as TAWC. We're a sexual assault centre that was established in 1992, so 23 years ago. On average, our funding for the sexual assault centre is about \$258,000 per year, and we have 3.25 staff and an active volunteer base of 15 to 20 volunteers at any given time.

The women's crisis centre, TAWC, basically works toward the prevention and eradication of all forms of violence against women, specifically sexual violence. We recognize that violence against women is one of the strongest indicators of prevailing societal attitudes towards women.

We're a member agency of both the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, OCRCC, as well as the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, OAITH.

We offer some of the following services: We have group and individual supportive feminist counselling—feminist counselling being a very different form of counselling than your typical. We offer a safe refuge from violence. We have a shelter program. We also have a 24-hour crisis line for both the sexual assault centre and for our women's shelter.

We have group programming; community events; and hospital, police reporting and court accompaniment. We accompany women to some of the most difficult places that they have to go to report. We have a transitional and housing support program through our agency. We have aboriginal programming, such as healing circles and smudge ceremonies.

We have a staff that's funded, that does information on the legal system, community resources and strategies

for coping. We offer information and support for partners, families and friends of survivors.

We do a lot of social awareness events: Take Back the Night, which most of you should be fairly familiar with; Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is the month of May, this month; International Women's Day; and December 6. We do a lot of public education to inform students, professionals and community members about violence against women and violence prevention.

So that's a list of some of the services that we do.

What we've come to know over the past 23 years is that sexual assault and harassment is a constant, daily part of women's and children's lives. That reality takes a great toll on women's lives. Misconceptions about sexual violence contribute to both individual and community responses to this gender-based crime.

Some of the misconceptions include—a lot of victim blaming; denial prevalence; and a lack of knowledge, which can impact survivors of sexual assault directly, for example, by functioning to cause people to minimize or question the experiences of victim/survivors—blaming the victim or survivor—and to contribute to the barriers of their experience and excuse the perpetrator's actions.

Rural women often face more complex concerns. Violence and abuse are often easily hidden in a rural setting because of the geographical remoteness. Sexual violence carries a particular stigma in rural areas. Rural women are seen as violating community norms by their peers and families if they seek help. Traditional norms are more prevalent in rural areas, and so are patriarchal attitudes that devalue and objectify women. Although poverty affects everyone in rural and urban settings, the rural poor experience of poverty manifests itself mostly around access to transportation and less opportunities for employment and wage levels that support sustainability. There is an abundance of weapons that are used in the north, hunting season being fairly common.

The Timmins area has no LGBTQ-identified organization that offers support, so the women's crisis takes on that role of supporting the LGBTQ community as much as we possibly can, understanding our mandate.

On another note, something that is rarely addressed in discussions about sexual violence is the toll that the work of supporting survivors, advocating for change and doing social justice activism takes on front-line workers. That is especially true where you have three staff—3.27 staff—who have consistently committed to supporting survivors of sexual violence, who are easily recognizable in a small community at the grocery store etc., where disclosures and resource information are sought by survivors, family friends and neighbours on a regular basis. So we liken ourselves to the doctors, pastors and priests who are always on duty—always “on”—because we're never really anonymous.

We often experience disbelief that sexual violence exists in small communities: “It always happens in the big cities,” and that is so not true. I can talk about a couple of personal experiences—a current situation that just happened on Monday. I'm going to go a little bit off-

script and give you a little bit of detail on this—not identified in the media yet as intimate partner violence because the media does not know how to identify that. We're currently working on a media kit to assist the media to be able to identify intimate partner violence and be able to speak to it in the media. They identified this as a personal attack. Understanding full well at this point that most of the information I'm getting are rumours—but my family is closely connected to the perpetrator and the victim as my children are the same age as them and friends with them.

So, 18 years old, a young man picks up the victim—coerces her to the car because she has been told that she's not allowed to see him anymore. He managed to coerce her by telling her that somebody had committed suicide: "I need you in the car. I really need to speak to you. I really need to be with you." She goes in the car. While in the car, he was seen driving 160 in an 80 zone and pulling U-turns on the highway; told her he was going to kill her and that if he can't have her, nobody can; proceeded to stab her while he was driving the car; and hit another vehicle head-on. When she didn't die and he didn't die, he continued to stab her, and he sliced his throat. He's dead; she's in the hospital in Ottawa at CHEO right now—13 stab wounds. She is very, very lucky to be alive. This is intimate partner violence. This is not a personal attack; it's intimate partner violence.

These are the things that we don't believe happen in our little cities. Timmins is a safe place to be, but do you know what? It happens everywhere. It doesn't matter how old you are. They're 18 years old, both in the vicinity of grades 11 or 12, about to graduate. You don't hear of this kind of stuff in these small cities, but it happens just as much here as anywhere else.

On a personal level, myself at the age of 17, I was living in Ottawa. I was gang-raped by six men—never reported it. I waited till they all fell asleep. I got up—there was myself and one other girl. I felt like I was to blame. I felt like it was my fault because I became friends with them. I joined their circles and hung out with them. They invited me over. What was I thinking, going there? I should not have. So those are all the things that a woman goes through.

1540

I did not deal with it. I only started working here at the sexual assault centre five years ago. Other than having spoken to my sister about it, my mother and my partners over the past 20 years—my ex-husband and my current partner—and my best friend—other than those five people, I never spoke a word of it to anybody else until I started working at the sexual assault centre and thought, "Oh, goodness. I probably need to deal with my stuff so that I'm able to help others, because if I don't deal with my own"—I could acknowledge that this happened to me, but I'd never really processed it. At the age of 17, that's not something that you can process.

Like I said, I waited until they all fell asleep and I snuck out and I moved back to Timmins. I called my mom and said, "Oh, my God. I need to come home. I'm in a lot of trouble," and I moved back to Timmins.

This stuff happens on a regular basis. It's scary stuff. I was just talking a little earlier about the front-line staff who deal with this every day. We need more staff. We need more people who can assist women going through it.

Some of our recommendations are very simple. Women in Crisis calls on the select committee members to address sexual violence through multiple levels, including, but not limited to, community-based policy and systemic approaches. Sexual violence cannot be divided from a broader social context, one in which the victim/survivor, the violation itself or the threat of it and the offender exist in a larger system of societal norms, values and beliefs. The World Health Organization agrees that many prevalent societal attitudes justify, tolerate, normalize and minimize sexual, physical and emotional violence against women and girls.

Timmins and Area Women in Crisis recommends the following approaches:

We believe that education on sexual violence, including information on prevalence, myths, misconceptions and attitudes informed by misogyny, greatly lends to the prevention of sexual violence. Also, a gender-based analysis ought to be integrated into all conversations and strategies for dealing with sexual violence, including workplace harassment.

Our next recommendation, probably my biggest one: We recommend adequate, stable funding for Ontario sexual assault centres and other services that support survivors so that they may better respond to sexual violence survivors and communities. Sexual assault centres already have the appropriate knowledge and skill set to deliver survivor-directed services. The structures are already in place. We hope that part of the action plan will include an increase in funding to sexual assault centres in Ontario, which have been doing this work for some 23 years and still only have 3.27 staff.

I highly recommend the engagement and the expertise of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres in your next steps of implementing the action plan's 13 steps. OCRCC has been a provincial organization aiming to improve systemic and supportive work for survivors of sexual violence for over 30 years and can offer a lot of information on best practices, educational prevention work and barriers facing survivors in Ontario's communities. I recommend that they be involved in how to implement these 13 steps. They need to be at the table at all times. They are the experts. When you want the experts, OCRCC are the sexual violence experts. And it wouldn't hurt to maybe incorporate a little bit of funding for them as well. I think that would really be helpful.

Another thing that we recommend is the active engagement of others with expertise in sexual violence, such as sexual assault support staff, aboriginal women in communities and sexual violence survivors. We support indigenous-led strategies to be incorporated into the gender-based violence against indigenous women—we support the integration of information and conversations on sexual consent, healthy relationships and online

sexual activity and to help the curriculum for the youth population.

We recommend that stakeholders aim to better understand and address reporting barriers, that the police really need some training to understand the barriers to reporting. Way too often are we told: "They need to report." It's not that simple, because that table is so quickly turned on you.

A cancer survivor went for dinner with a friend, and he horribly violated her. The judge said to her, "Why didn't you just leave?" It's not that simple. Understanding the broader context—the police, the judicial system, just doesn't get sexual violence. Sexual violence is not the same as your regular, everyday—it is so unique and so different. Providing funding to a mainstream organization and saying, "Do sexual violence work" is not going to work. You need the feminist counselling agencies to have that funding to be able to proceed. We also hope that prevention campaigns will continue to hold men accountable for their abusive behaviour.

That's pretty much my presentation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Julie. Lots of information there for us to consider. Our first questions for you are going to be from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi, Julie. It's Eleanor McMahon. Thanks for the work that you do, and thank you for taking time out of your very busy day to offer us some excellent recommendations.

One of the prevailing themes that we're hearing about is that the justice system—or the formal court process, if you will—is not something that is accessed by many survivors, nor is it a process they want to undertake. I just wondered if that's consistent with your work in Timmins and, consequently, your thoughts on how we could provide support to survivors, particularly those who don't want to come forward. Certainly in smaller communities, there are issues with not so much stranger danger, but knowing your perpetrator. Can you give us some ideas and some thoughts on that?

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: I may not have captured that entirely, because I think there are a couple of components to your question. If I don't answer it completely, please let me know.

When it comes to the justice system, I think one of the big flaws or difficulties is that, as a sexual assault centre, we're almost not taken seriously at times. When we go in to see the police, we're not considered probation, police or crown attorney, so when we go in to speak to the police etc., they almost don't see us as experts. They see themselves as the ones who know this stuff better than anyone else. So I think it's important for them to get this training from sexual assault centres and recognize that sexual assault centres know this stuff and are able to train them in the best way possible to better understand victims.

Why do they not report, and is there a way to help women report? Well, it's about holding the perpetrator accountable. What happens is that when a woman does

report and it goes to court, first of all she's ostracized by her community, by her friends, because they happen to be his friends as well: "How could you be doing that to him?" or "I never saw that," calling her a liar—all of those things that happen to women when they come forward.

We saw it with Jian Ghomeshi. We saw it with Bill Cosby—we had celebrities calling out other folks who were coming forward about Bill Cosby. This is a very public forum. Bring that down to a small-town scale where everybody knows each other and it's very, very difficult, because you're basically calling out your brother's friend or your aunt's boyfriend—who knows—in a small community. I don't know if there's much that we can do to help survivors come forward, other than really holding perpetrators accountable and getting rid of that victim blaming.

How do we do that? Public education is probably the best way. For many, many years, we've been seen as radical feminists who are always talking about sexual violence; this is probably an amazing time in history right now, with you at the table. You have the ability to make some changes with sexual violence that have never, ever been made in history. It's wild. This is a really exciting time for us, because we've never had an opportunity where sexual violence was the primary topic. This is a great opportunity for you folks at the table to be able to make some very important decisions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much, Julie, for being with us today.

1550

We've heard from different communities as we've travelled. There's certainly some best practices in different communities. Other communities need a little help in coordinating services. It disturbs me a bit, what you were saying about kind of the culture that's up there. I represent a rural community. I hear you. I just had my local community organization speak to us. We heard the statistics that basically parallel what you're saying about the known offenders.

I don't know if you've seen the programs; I think they're called Draw the Line. Basically they're teaching men and boys how to act. Draw the Line is basically saying what I'm trying to say. Is there anything like that initiative up there in Timmins area—

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: There is? Okay.

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Do you find that that's helpful? Can you get into the schools? What is the kind of relationship? It was a little disturbing what you said about the police. How can we help you up there?

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Well, the Draw the Line campaign is a perfect example of something as a rural community that we were able to really bite into, that was tangible for us to be able—and we postered the entire city. We postered the posts on the highway going through

the city. We had them all over the place. It was a fantastic campaign and a great opportunity for us to be able to get the message out. It looked professional. It was funded. It was fantastic.

Those are the types of programs that we need to get out there. Yes, every now and then we'd walk by and there was a poster that was pulled down, but we just kept putting it back up. That is really important.

As far as the schools, I think the most recent changes with the sexual violence in school, the sexual violence curriculum in schools—that's really going to help us be able to get our foot into the schools. Our mandate is 16 and up, so the schools, when we work with them, we work with the high schools, right? The curriculum is very helpful.

I think really the justice partners is where we need to be. I think the fact that people are taking sexual violence more seriously is key; so continue talking about it, continue bringing it to the table. Programs like Draw the Line need to be funded and need to be continued. That is a fantastic program.

Like I said, as a rural community we don't have all the resources that large urban communities have. We don't have the ability to invest a whole bunch of money into a campaign. Draw the Line was free for us. We were able to just basically email them and say, "I need 50 of these posters and 500 postcards." It was free and that was key for us, because \$258,000 to run a sexual assault centre is not a lot of money.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I hear you. Thank you, Julie.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, Julie. Thank you for taking the time to present to this committee.

It's always surprising to me, given the number of presentations that we've heard, when some new themes start to emerge. There's a lot of consistency but also some new issues that are raised. This morning, in fact, we heard about sexual assault centre staff who experience harassment when they're out in the community doing their work. You talked about the toll that is taken on staff who work on the front line in your agency.

Can you tell us a bit about what kinds of—are there resources to support front-line staff in the vicarious trauma and the wear and tear that they experience when they're helping women who have experienced violence?

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Yes. So, sexual assault centres—you're right, that is a very dangerous field. Our public educator will not do anything alone. She always has to have a second person with her at all times. There's always assault. We have to safety-plan around when she has presentations that she does publicly. We always have because that is a dangerous place to go.

People don't understand sexual violence. That's the bottom line: People don't understand it. People can't wrap their heads around it. Marital sexual violence: "Well, she's my wife"—you know, people don't get it.

Yes, we do have some plans. As far as the supports, as a feminist centre we're very supportive of our staff and

ensure to provide them with as much time as they need. We do a lot of debriefing, that kind of stuff—not enough to be able to properly support the staff and the stories that they hear, because they are really going down to the nitty-gritty with some of the women. They're reliving some of these women's historical traumas because of the sexual assault centre.

Sexual violence and domestic violence are so integrated, quite often, and sometimes it's difficult to keep them separate. So when they come in, they're talking about everything, and it's not just that sexual experience. It's about everything, and how that one sexual experience when they were 10 years old—by their grandfather—has impacted their entire life, and now they've become—so the front-line workers are hearing everything. The public educators do have to safety-plan. There are not enough supports to ensure that the staff is well cared for and that they're taking care of themselves.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Julie DeMarchi, thank you so much for speaking to us today. We appreciate the call with you.

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: I truly appreciate it. Like I said, it is an honour to have spoken to you. Please, do the best that you can with this, because this is a very exciting time, and a very important time, in the sexual violence work.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you for the conversation today. Bye-bye.

Ms. Julie DeMarchi: Bye-bye.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, our next person is due at 4:30. Why don't we all reconvene here at 4:25, to be ready for that? Thank you. We're adjourned.

The committee recessed from 1556 to 1624.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, we resume our hearings this afternoon.

COLONEL MICHEL DRAPEAU

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Joining us now is Michel Drapeau. For the record, please tell us your name and if you have any titles you wish to add.

Colonel Michel Drapeau: My name is Michel Drapeau. I'm a retired colonel. I served 34 years in the military. I'm also a law professor at Ottawa university, and I'm a practitioner. I have my own office in Ottawa specializing in military law. That's the short of it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. You'll have 20 minutes to address our committee—up to 20 minutes, if you wish—and that will be followed by questions.

Colonel Michel Drapeau: I don't have any prepared script. I'm going to speak about three or four points that I want to make to you, not really knowing what the parameters of your committee are all about. Presumably we're here to discuss sexual misconduct in various establishments within Ontario.

I testified before the US Congress a couple of times last year about the same issue, so it's not something that

is unique to the Canadian military. Many other militaries have come across the same difficulties, particularly those who haven't followed the suit that is taking place at the moment in Europe, particularly as a result of the European human rights tribunals that fundamentally have questioned the jurisdiction of military tribunals to deal with ordinary common-law offences. Countries such as Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, France and many, many others have eliminated military tribunals in peacetime, so those are dealt with by common-law tribunals—which is one of the issues I want to return to, as to why we have the problems that we have today.

If I were to encapsulate the problem as I see it, one of the major issues—of course, sexual assault, whether it be one or five a day, is something that should be a concern to all of us. What is of major concern to me is one issue: under-reporting, something which we have found to be present in the United States Armed Forces, where there are 33,000 reported sexual assaults; a number of others are not. In Canada, I know from my own practice, I know from my own studies, that a significant number, up to 70% of those, are not reported. So the statistics that we have are skewed, to say the least.

Because our military justice system provides now, and only since 1998, the military with the jurisdiction to deal with it, I have to go back—allow me just a couple of minutes to explain in as brief terms as possible as to what's happening and why it is happening.

The Code of Service Discipline was modified in 1998 in order to provide the military, through an amendment, jurisdiction over sexual assault. Up until 1998, the Canadian military could not prosecute murder, manslaughter, kidnapping of children or sexual assault. As a result of a massive amendment in 1998 in the wake of the Somalia inquiry, an amendment was just slipped in. There was no debate anywhere. The minister introducing the bill, the Honourable Art Eggleton, did not mention it at first or second reading. The committee did not discuss it. Nobody raised an issue. All of a sudden, we found the military being equipped with this.

First of all, the issue of policing is a large issue because the military police have not been found to be experienced in investigating crimes of this particular nature, and others. All I have to tell is the report that was produced a month and a half ago by the Military Police Complaints Commission that basically said in no uncertain terms that the military police are not experienced, not competent, to do criminal investigation.

Having said that, once you go to the prosecution side of the house, the prosecution and the defence both work for the Judge Advocate General, who in turn works for a political minister. He works for the defence minister, not the CDS.

As a prosecution proceeds, the military has a choice: either to prosecute the offence as a discipline issue or as a criminal issue. More often than not, they would do it under "Conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline."

I'm representing at the moment Stéphanie Raymond, whose face was on the front cover of Maclean's maga-

zine last May. A young lady in Quebec City had been assaulted on the 15th of December, 2011. Her case incarnates what's wrong with the Canadian military's handling or mishandling of sexual misconduct issues. What I'm going to relate, as it concerns Stéphanie Raymond, I could apply here at the college. It's the same circumstances, with the same litany of problems.

Stéphanie Raymond was assaulted on the 15th of December, 2011. She went home, thought about it, spoke to a few close friends and family, and when she came back to her militia unit in early January, she reported to her chain of command. She reported to a captain, for whom her assailant worked—her assailant being a warrant officer, somebody many ranks over her, a bigger size than she was, and responsible, in fact, for her career and her economic well-being. As a reservist, she served in class B. Class B means that you go from contract to contract to contract. The warrant officer held in his hand the ability to renew or not renew her contract.

When she did this and nothing happened with the chain of command, she went and saw the Lévis police just outside of Quebec City. They said, "Go and see the military police." She went to see the military police. The investigation was opened and closed the same day. They said, "You don't have a case."

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Now she went back to her unit and her unit said, "You should go through mediation." She was told three times that she should go through mediation.

When that did not work, she asked to be separated from her assailant, who was part of their office staff of four. They put a cloth in the door.

When that didn't work, about six months after, they moved her 45 kilometres across the river to a new unit. Her class B ceased; a promotion was denied. She went into a deep descent, eventually attempted suicide, and started to put harassment complaints in it. The harassment complaints were not investigated.

It was only when the journalists from L'actualité, and eventually Maclean's, started asking questions that a charge was laid against the individual, and he was charged with conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline. This "go to your room" type of thing is what you're going to get as a result of it.

When the report came out, a journalist called me and asked me if I could take over her case from this point onward, which I did. That's the first thing I asked. It took me about three weeks to find out what charges had been laid against him—and by the time they did, they said, "But here's a new charge. We'll charge him with sexual assault."

While this was taking place, on December 15, 2013, exactly two years to the day, she was fired from her job. She received, by Speedy Messenger or something, an order saying, "You've been released. Your contract"—or job, or whatever—"has been done."

Eventually, the court martial took place—last year—and now, some improvement and some repairs and remedies are coming to pass.

But that's exactly the sort of circumstances I find at the college here, where individuals do not report sexual assault.

Some of you may be aware of a report by Gloria Galloway, that was published in the *Globe and Mail* a couple of weeks ago, about the military college. When Madame Deschamps's report exploded—and I've been following it for quite a while; I've been writing about it for quite a while also—I decided to contact Mrs. Galloway and tell her this story.

This story goes this way: In 2013 I came to this fair city a couple of times, accompanied by my wife, who also works at the office, to interview a number of would-be victims as a result of information that I had received in confidence as to these individual young cadets—all of them young females in their second or third years—having been assaulted. The degree of assault, and the severity of it, has varied quite a bit.

None of them were prepared—I wouldn't say to go public, but to go to report it to the authorities. Some of them retained our services, and the reason why they retained our services is to act, basically, as a protector of their rights as cadets; their rights as members of the Armed Forces; their rights to complete their studies and go on with their careers. That was the purpose of it.

All of them, without exception, as a result of the assault, or coincident with the assault, were revictimized by becoming the subject of harassment, of discrimination. In the process, their health deteriorated. Some of them, in fact, attempted suicide more than once. They were separated and, in some cases, estranged from their families, who live in various provinces. They had nobody to go to, nobody at the college to go to—they didn't know who to trust—and they were there. Some of them took a medical release.

We have two cases that are taking place, and that's the reason why I'm here in town. It's exactly the same issue: a complaint of a sexual assault that took place in 2013.

I want to come back to 2013.

After I got this information and had seen these persons first-hand, I decided I had to be loyal to my oath to protect the identity and the information that I had received in confidence. I wrote a letter to the commandant—first, to the president of the board of governors, a fellow who I knew, because I myself had just terminated a tour on the board of governors of the college of Saint-Jean in Quebec. I wrote to him in that capacity.

In the letter that I did write on June 3, I said, "I'm writing to you as a former commissioned officer—we served together—second, as a former board of governors member, and as a lawyer. I'm telling you there is a major issue here, a major issue of under-reporting, let alone the fact of the existence of it, which I'm presuming you're dealing with.

"I'm suggesting to you, as Madame Deschamps has said, that there be a safe zone, that there be somebody—clergy, academia, media, politicians, whatever it is—a person who will feel safe to go to, and to report and to receive support."

I received a letter and I was furious, to say the least, because the response was, "Well, we'll address that as soon as we can when we return in September." That just made me so mad that I wrote a letter to send to the commandant of the military college and the Minister of National Defence in his capacity as chancellor of the RMC, to which I have yet to receive a response. You can imagine my—"disappointment" would be a huge understatement. I now have new clients who come to see me and say that they've been subject to assault in September and October 2013, which is what this court martial is all about, two months or three months after I sent this letter out.

Why am I focusing on the military college? I don't think the military college is more fertile in this type of misconduct than many other organizations in Canada—for a number of reasons, and I'll cover two. I think that in most organizations where you have young men and women whose hormones are at full speed, liquor is readily available and they have very good pay indeed, you have a recipe where this kind of thing could happen more. Unless you have not only discipline, but supervision and an absolutely ironclad process whereby somebody could go and report a crime, that will happen.

I am certain that the situation exists in most of our cadet schools; anybody who doesn't is wilfully blind. At large schools like Borden, which has a student population of between 8,000 and 10,000, it is significant. The difference with the college is that you have two tiers of supervision, two tiers of authority. The first one is the individuals who are of a certain age and certain rank—the lieutenant colonels, colonels, majors and so on—but they're small in number, and they look at running the general administration of it.

But the discipline, the supervision—en français on dit «l'encadrement»—of cadets belongs to senior cadets. These guys—I'm asking you to close your eyes and go back to the time you were 18, 19 and 20. The power, the influence that a 19- or 20-year-old young man can have on a young 17-year-old is incredible. It's three or four times the kind of difference that would apply to the other age factors. So when these guys are given the grade, the authority—they have the stature, they've got the good looks, they've got the energy and everybody likes to be popular, more so when you're 17 or 18 and unsure of yourself and so on—these guys sway an awful lot of power over some of the young charges, many of them female. They're easy to seduce and to be seduced by, and that's what we see.

The problem we see at the military college is cadets upon cadets. There is, in fact, sort of a mafia code of silence that is in there. You don't dare to speak, because most of our guys, if not all of them, can make your life very difficult. Most of them are chosen because they are athletic, they are good, they are smart, they are articulate and they are going places. They are the leaders of tomorrow, so to try to make the case that a 16- or 17-year-old—you're naive, you're uncertain of yourself. To try to make a charge of sexual misconduct or impropriety

or whatever takes a lot of bravery, courage and support, and they don't have it. That's what we see. That's the first reason. It's a concern, and I see it; I heard it again today.

The second reason is the individuals who are picked, the thousand or so cadets that come to the college are—I think it's reasonable to suggest—in many respects the cream of the cream. They go through an extensive selection process—linguistic, athletic, racial, gender, sometimes geographic and so on, and the good marks that they have—and they should. I don't know of anybody in Canada, at least in my Canada, who has a more privileged position than somebody who serves at the military college.

Consider that they get paid going through college—not only paid; the time they serve at the college is pensionable. If they were there five years, when they retire as a general, five of the 35 years will be from the college. They don't pay for their tuition, don't pay for room and board and don't pay for the uniform. They get some pay deducted, but they're fine. Health care is on demand; they don't have to line up. They don't have to find family physicians. Dental care is on demand, and they have one of the best sports programs; the lowest student-teacher ratio you could find at any Canadian university. Maybe you could find it at some private university in the States—certainly in Canada. There's a certain elitism about this, both the uniform, the standing and so on. I don't know of too many mothers of my generation who did not wish her son to go to the military college.

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So they have it all, at the end of which, not a penny of debt and a guaranteed career at least for five years. They may be obliged to serve, but they have a career to go to at the end of five years.

I work, and I teach, and I see some of our young students who have \$90,000 worth of debt or the lawyers we have in the office with \$100,000 accumulated debt—married and a mortgage and so on and so forth.

I'm saying that, first of all, because they are a privileged lot, more significantly, only 20% of them remain to make a full career in the forces. We find them overrepresented by a long shot—I'm not criticizing; I'm just stating the facts—in the senior ranks of the armed forces. The CDS at the moment, the VCDS, the chief of the army, the chief of the air force: They're all graduates of the military college. So it tells you if they become a four star, a three star or two stars, they would have had to navigate rather rapidly and quickly through the hierarchy. They play a dominant role, and you can watch them. You can see them because they've had a special formation—not only academic formation but four years' athletic formation, military formation, second-language formation and so on. They stand apart. They are the elite. If we cannot expect the elite to be disciplined and the elite to trust one another and the elite to be respectful of one another, we've got a problem.

So many of them find themselves in key leadership positions. What I am told by young cadets who come to

see me is that the culture at the college is—the difficulty that many of them have, young victims, is the treatment, the response, the callous reflexes of their female cadet friends who tell them, “Well, what do you expect? That's part of military culture. You better get used to it”; as Madame Deschamps said, a “passage obligé.”

That's my characterization. That's my interpretation. That's my assessment of it. If it is, as we say in the movie, “Houston, we've got a problem.” Because it's not by doing a court martial here or there—and that's really what's happening—that's going to fix the problem. We have a cultural issue and the cultural issue won't be fixed by leaving the military to give us another promise, which they did, by the way, in 1998 when Maclean's magazine published, back to back to back, three front page covers on rape in the military. Things haven't changed. I think it's gotten worse.

So my recommendation—and I'll finish on that—has been, continues to be that we in fact need to get rid of that and ensure that in fact anybody, any place in Canada—no second-class citizens, whether you're Canadian-born, or RMC cadets—if you've been subject to an assault, you call the police and let the police conduct an independent, impartial professional investigation and let prosecution take place, if it does take place, before a civilian court of law.

Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Monsieur Drapeau. Our first question for you is from our PC caucus.

MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here today. I guess what I'm going through with your presentation—the Ontario Legislature has no jurisdiction in the military or with the college and no influence on the military code of conduct and all those different things, but what you're seeing and what you relayed about the experiences of cadets and people in the military certainly has a very clear parallel with what happens in the private sector and what happens in civilian life—maybe more amplified and exasperated in the military culture or military institutions.

What information can we draw from the military experience, in your involvement with the military, that we can use for civilians under provincial legislation? You mentioned that the lack of reporting in the military is also a problem in the civilians—so from your knowledge of our legal system and practising as a lawyer, what suggestions or recommendations could you offer this committee that we could look at and put in place in practice?

Colonel Michel Drapeau: Funny you should ask. Let me get on my soapbox as to what I think ought to be done—and I'm having quite a bit of difficulty, so I'll share with you my experience over the past year or so in doing this, as more cases like this come to light.

It may have to do with my age or my background or whatever—but when I see these young women coming, they're desperate. They come to me from an angle, sort of: They don't want to address the sexual assault, but

everything that results from it—loss of a job, loss of status, loss of confidence, *joie de vivre*, and so on and so forth. For those who have come forward, such as Madame Raymond—I've had four so far, such as the young cadets who I'm acting for at the moment—the reaction has been the same. When I present myself as acting for these individuals, I'm getting a visceral, if not violent, reaction, not from the defence—they don't care—but from the prosecutor's office. "You're going to do what?" "I'm acting for her. Come through me. And when you interview this person, I'm going to be there. I'm not going to be in the way; I want you to succeed. I'm going to be there because I'm the only friend in place that she has, somebody to turn to who can really act for her." The prosecution doesn't act for her—not against her, but it does not act for her.

In two recent cases, it made a difference between a prosecution or no prosecution, because the person felt, and one of the persons in particular said, the only—she said "friend," but really, what she meant was, "The only person who is loyal to me, by virtue of his mandate, is my lawyer, and I want him to be here." So I was.

In all four cases, at the end of it, they've turned around to me and thanked me for my presence—not my activity; my presence. So throughout their doing this, by giving this person, the victim, a chance to have somebody to speak to and somebody to receive advice from on something as simple as a publication ban—in all four interviews that I've been at, the prosecution tells their client, "We shall have...."; "I do one or the other." They're not being asked. The client cannot ask, "What are my choices? Have I got a voice in it? Have I got a choice?" They're being told. In some cases, they are trusting also that they will look after them during the cross-examination or subsequently; they're not. So there is a failure here by the system.

This poor female can call her insurance agent or call anybody else, but at the moment of need—and she's all alone; she's got nobody to speak to—she calls the police. In most cases, police are receptive. In some cases, they're not. I've seen cases like that.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Mr. Randy Hillier: One—

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): No, I'm sorry. You can talk later on your own.

NDP caucus? MPP Natyshak.

M. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Chair. Monsieur Drapeau, merci beaucoup d'être ici. Merci pour votre députation. Aussi, merci infiniment pour votre service à notre pays.

Colonel Michel Drapeau: Merci.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My questions are along the same lines. Given the parameters of this committee and the limitations of the provincial government in relation to the Canadian Forces and the Royal Military College, I would ask for your counsel in what we can do to raise awareness or what we can do to facilitate the changes that I think you are working on. We are all aware of the

10 recommendations that have been recently made by Madame Deschamps. Two, we understand, have been accepted; eight have been accepted in principle.

Our Canadian Forces are exemplary in many ways. Sexual assault and sexual violence within the Canadian Forces are akin, as I see it, to sexual assault and violence in the public service or in any workplace. These are incidents of workplace violence. Are there any of the 10 recommendations that are transferrable, for the purposes of this committee, to the broader public sector in Ontario? Are there any lessons that we can learn? What would you point to or guide us towards within the recommendations that Madame Deschamps proposed?

Colonel Michel Drapeau: I think the scourge is among us, not only within the Canadian military. It's there. I think the under-reporting issue is there also. We can never get a true measure of it. And probably those that are under-reported are not the benign type, but of the more severe type. I've found some people who came who were violently raped, and those people are immersed in thoughts of shame and blame and lack of everything else and so on, and they put their lives in danger.

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From what I can see, what Madame Deschamps has said is she was prevented from looking at any aspect of the military justice system. Her mandate excluded her from it and the military police. So it's a circumvented way to say—and she said the 700 people she spoke to did not trust the military justice system or the military police. So she said, "Let's have a system outside."

To my mind, you don't need to build a system outside. You have the system outside. Somehow, you have to reach out to these individuals who do not report. At the moment, the system is not very, *en français*, accueillant. It's not very warm. You don't have an 800 line.

The federal government, and I will be critical for a moment, has recently passed a law, a charter of rights—what do you call it?—a victims' bill of rights. Well, let me tell you how unimpressed I am. At section 18 of that bill, it excludes the military. It excludes members who report a crime to the military police for prosecution by the military. So the military victims of sexual crimes are denuded of any protection, they're denuded of any support and, at the moment, denuded of any bill of rights.

What can you do as a province? I don't know. But you have an Attorney General, and he or she sits at the table at the federal level. I see under-reporting as the issue where, if I had to concentrate the resources that I have, and the weight—and Ontario is the largest province—I'd say that's what we need to address. That may require a special mechanism to do that.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Merci beaucoup d'être ici. C'est un grand honneur d'avoir l'opportunité de vous avoir en présence ici.

Je vais réitérer ce que mon collègue a dit. Merci pour tout votre service ici au Canada et à travers le monde.

My colleagues, I think, are bringing forward some great topics, in bringing it back to the province. But I guess I'm a little curious, and I'm going to keep—although it may not be our jurisdiction, I guess I just wanted to know. I know that, publicly, you've said that you would like to see—and I'm hearing this through your words—a third-party civilian oversight investigating cases. Maybe I would like you, for this committee, just to elaborate on what it would look like, in your perspective.

Colonel Michel Drapeau: I would not have one. Madame Deschamps has said—we're both saying—it has to be taken out of the military. To my mind, we would amend section 70. Section 70(d) should say “sexual assault.” They don't deal with it.

Then, as part of the civilian police and civilian courts—some of them have got special units responding to this, and I've dealt with them, and I've been impressed.

Only recently, when I took a victim of a crime unreported since 2007—it took us all that time to convince her to come forward. It was to the military police. When I asked the military police for the names of those who would be interviewing her, and their ranks and their gender, I was told their ranks and their names. “Why would gender mean anything?” was the response that I got. I said, “If I need to explain this to you, we've got a problem.” So I did explain it. Then when we showed up a couple of days after, it was a “she” who was in the room, conducting the investigation.

The military police don't have the critical mass required to acquire the experience and the diversity, and they get posted all the time, and so on. Many of them investigate one sexual assault every second year or so, so they're gauche at doing it—not because they're bad people and so on, but they're not doing it.

So I say do it with the civilian police. Augment the local police, if required. There's probably a bill attached

to it—I don't know what it is—but do that. There has to be—I don't know if it's a commission or a special office—a safe zone where people—if I'm right in suggesting under-reporting is a problem, civil or military, then we face a common issue. Who do people who are high school students or university students, or their parents, go to? You expect them to walk into a police station? It's pretty intimidating for anybody to do that. If you are a young person, being assaulted on top of that—give him or her that support, a multidisciplinary type of support. That's what I would do. And it could be une équipe volante or it could be in large centres.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: We're talking military, but could that be applicable, in terms of concept, for a provincial—

Colonel Michel Drapeau: Absolutely. That's what I see. Absolutely. I think we could do mankind and womankind a huge service by doing so, showing that we care. We're not throwing more resources at the courts or the police.

We have to receive them, first and foremost, and even if they decide, for reasons of their own, not to file a complaint, they need assistance. They need a shoulder. They need somebody who can comprehend and perhaps assist them in some other ways.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We're very grateful for your presence here today and for sharing your expertise with us. We appreciate it very much.

Colonel Michel Drapeau: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, that is our day for Kingston. Our hearings are now coming to an end. I'll see you all tomorrow morning at 8 a.m. in Ottawa. The bus will be on the driveway for us at 5:15. Please be ready to go.

Thanks. We're adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1655.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Friday 22 May 2015

**Select Committee
on Sexual Violence
and Harassment**

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment



Journal des débats (Hansard)

Vendredi 22 mai 2015

**Comité spécial de la violence
et du harcèlement
à caractère sexuel**

Stratégie de lutte contre
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE ET DU HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Friday 22 May 2015

Vendredi 22 mai 2015

The committee met at 0759 in the Ottawa Marriott Hotel, Ottawa.

STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good morning, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order.

I'd like to welcome all of our presenters this morning, and the guests who are here with us today. Let me quickly share with you the mandate of this committee. We are here to listen to the experiences of survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward and reporting abuses. However, I do want to stress that this committee does not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

I would like to stress to our committee members who are here—and I will do this again to the other committee members when they arrive—that we have gone back to our 20-minute scheduling today. Our presenters will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and then our three caucuses will be sharing the remaining time, so a total of 20 minutes. I encourage all committee members to make your questions as concise as possible.

MANUP

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Let me welcome our very first presenters, from ManUp. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

Mr. Travis Wing: My name is Travis Wing. I'm the teacher coordinator.

Mr. Belal Qayum: My name is Belal. I'm one of the members of ManUp.

Mr. Euan Scoffield: My name is Euan Scoffield. I'm also one of the members.

Mr. Elias Papoulias: My name is Elias Papoulias. I'm also one of the members.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And begin any time.

Mr. Travis Wing: Okay. Hello. Thank you very much for having us. It's a super-important day for us, something we've been building up for for a while now.

Please accept our apologies in advance that we're not public speakers; that's not how we go about our business here at ManUp. Most of the time we have our conversations in really small groups, intimately amongst a much less intimidating crowd.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just consider this a very intimate group, okay?

Mr. Travis Wing: I feel pretty intimate. Yes, this is nice. The guys will be a little bit nervous, but just be patient with us. We are a student-led group. These guys have done all the legwork, and we wouldn't have it any other way.

I was hoping to roll a quick little video of our work on CTV, but there's no audio, so I'll probably save us that time. But if I can maybe click some of the screen shots—we had some big assemblies and we had a lot of public attention because we've done a lot of work with Glen Canning, who—I suppose we don't have to tell that story about his tragedy and being affected by violence against women, so we'll leave it at that and I'll let the guys start going about our history. I believe Belal is going to get going on that.

Mr. Belal Qayum: Yes. This started all the way back last year in May 2014, when a group of boys were chosen and we went down to listen to a conference at city hall. When we got to city hall, we heard a lot of guests speak. One of the guests was Glen Canning. When he told his story and what happened to his daughter, it really affected us, and inspired and motivated us to do something about it, to act and not just to leave without doing anything. That kind of sparked the idea of ManUp.

Fast-forward a couple of months to the start of this school year, and that's when we had our October launch assembly. That's when we put up posters around the school and really just presented ManUp. We invited all the males to talk to. We presented ManUp and we explained what ManUp was and why it was needed, not just in the school but also in the community. We also created and showed a PSA video in the school in our winter break assembly. Really, it just reminded students to be careful during parties in the break and to act if they saw anything.

We were invited to the OCTEVAW conference and also the OCDSB leadership conference. That's where we presented ManUp and we talked about ManUp to other various members of the OCDSB school district.

We recently had our ManUp Inspire Conference. That's where we expanded ManUp to schools who wanted to join us. There were a lot of guest speakers there who presented, such as Glen Canning. We showed them what ManUp was, and we presented them a toolkit to help them in the year and to meet ManUp's criteria.

All that kind of leads us to where we are today. Thank you.

Mr. Travis Wing: Thanks, Belal. I'll share with you guys a bit of what we've done in terms of a model for sustainability. We designed it to be guaranteed successful. I guess it happened when we first saw Mr. Canning at that conference that Belal was talking about at city hall. We were invited, and Mr. Canning came over to us directly. He was speaking to a big group, most of whom were either victims of sexual violence or they had roles—a lot of people you're probably going to meet with today, as a matter of fact, but none of them were males and none of them were young males. As soon as Glen was done talking, he walked over to us. He directly approached and spoke to the guys who were in the group. He was tearing up, so I was tearing up. Everybody was tearing up. He was just saying, "For the first time since my daughter has been gone, I feel a sense of hope." He said, "Every father"—and he started tearing up further. He said, "I don't get to call myself that anymore because I don't have a daughter, I don't have any kids anymore." That's what got me. I was in. He said, "Every father needs a hero for their daughter, and you guys can be heroes."

At that time, they looked at us and they said, "We're doing something, right? We have to listen to what he said." Myself and my colleague Aaron Leach decided we need to build something. We need to build an arena for these kids to send their message and to be student leaders.

What we've done is we've created that moment of inspiration that happened as a coincidence. A major part of what we do is create the moment of inspiration. We built our sustainable organized focus group around it. We took the kids on a retreat at the beginning of the year. We left the school. We chatted about ideas, what they wanted to do, what they wanted to implement, what specific acts of violence and harassment they wanted to target.

Then we moved forward from there to have our launch assembly. The guys pitched their ideas to the school. They brought every male student from our school into the gym. We brought Mr. Canning back. He spoke to every guy in the school. Then we sent our message saying that this isn't going to happen here. We're going to draw a line from what we're going to tolerate in our school and what we're not going to tolerate.

I'll let Euan talk about what happened after that moment.

Mr. Euan Scofield: Hi. So, I'll just be quickly highlighting the various campaigns and initiatives that ManUp has done to help spread awareness of what we do, and try to get people on board with what we do as well.

To start off, our poster campaign that Belal mentioned earlier: We started this initiative right after our big as-

sembly in October. This was really to get the gears going. We wanted to get the message out; we wanted to get our faces into our school. We created these lovely posters thanks to Mr. Wing. We posted various sizes, various models of these posters around our school. As you can see, each poster has an individual quote that each of us had selected that we each believe has some significant meaning to something about ending violence against women.

This initiative was almost crucial and essential to our plan to get our message across as well as put our faces into our school and get people to think about who we are. It was an essential component to begin our campaign.

Next was our social media presence. Twitter is obviously a big part of our generation; almost everyone is using it. We felt we needed to get on board as soon as possible. We started up a Twitter page where we do post tweets on various occasions. Right after our assembly we make sure to announce what our upcoming plans are. Before big events, such as Christmas break or Easter break, we want to send a message out saying, "Be safe on these holidays" etc. I think that it's gotten a lot of great feedback. We have up to 370 followers after just over a year of having created ManUp, which I think is great, and it's growing at a rapid rate.

Next what we did was we created our public service video. This was completely student-made. Mr. Wing, this time, was not affiliated with this. Not only was the ManUp crew involved but we also took students other than ManUp, including girls, who were interested in helping spread the message as well.

We'd like to show this video, but due to time purposes and as well as the audio issue, it might not work. But it's basically a PSA video just describing significant events. In this event, it's a typical high school party. One girl seems to be passed out and it's leading to what the viewer might think—a guy might take advantage of this passed-out girl. Then the tension is rising and the viewers might think, "Oh no, what's he going to do next?" He does the right thing. He ends up taking her cellphone and calling her parents to say, "Hey, could you come pick her up? Something's wrong." It kind of leaves the audience with a relieved feeling that something actually went right for once.

Honestly, I think that's something that we have to think about because, is that something to be relieved about? That should be something that's expected. Why should we expect something wrong from a guy like that? If anything, we should expect him to do that. It shouldn't be a relief, or it shouldn't be something that we're proud to say, "Oh yeah, he did that." It should be something where we say, "He should have done that."

Mr. Travis Wing: I'll interject before I introduce Elias. The coolest thing—as the leaders, myself and Mr. Leach were looking at our overall project and we're starting to try and decide, "How do we know this is working?"

0810

Euan touched on it there: This was made almost entirely by kids who were not in the ManUp group. I'll

get Euan to tell a story about a Facebook issue as well. We have our group of 12 guys, but when we started seeing the other kids in the school, who are not directly affiliated with what we do, sending our message and doing our work, that's when we know that we're starting to get a critical mass of people in our small community who are stepping out of their comfort zone and their box to make sure that these acts of violence and sexual violence are not taking place in our community.

Do you want to touch on that Facebook thing?

Mr. Euan Scofield: Yes, sure. So a lot of questions that various people ask are, "Well, are you guys actually making an impact in your school? You can say all of this, but we need to see results." We completely agree with that. We do. There's actually evidence that we do actually make an impact.

Sometime before Christmas break last year, there was an event on another social media site, Instagram. There was a student in our school in a younger grade, who did post a photo of another girl in our school with a very derogatory caption. Obviously, it was disrespectful. It was unjust. Immediately, all the ManUp guys saw this and we said, "Okay, we have to do something."

Now, before we were even able to comment on this photo, immediately we saw various other students from other grades commenting on this photo, telling them, "Hey, what are you doing? This is wrong. Why would you post something like this?" They were riddling him with all of these comments that eventually he was forced to take it down, because no one was approving of what he was doing. The ManUp crew saw that right away. We didn't have to do anything before someone interjected and made that guy think about what he did.

We think that's amazing, because that's essentially what we're trying to do. We're trying to get people involved. For us, that was a big step forward in what we are trying to do.

Mr. Travis Wing: Thanks, Euan. Elias, do you want to talk a little bit about the bring-a-buddy-to-lunch program that we do?

Mr. Elias Papoulas: All right. So essentially what the bring a buddy to lunch is, is we don't take it from just our group anymore, the group of loving guys behind me and sitting here. We also bring in others from our school. We believe that we bring in people who are good figures, they believe in what we are doing and it's people that others can follow easily. This was including people from, say, younger grades—grade 8—and strong female leaders etc.

Together, we talk about predetermined topics that we believe need to be covered and shared about. We also share success stories—like you just heard about the Instagram one—about how people have manned up. As a group, we train our buddies as well about how they can man up when they're put in certain situations or when they see something is not right.

These lunches aren't just talking either. We actually start doing things. An example of this is during one of our bringing a buddy to lunch, we created that PSA, the idea and everything behind it.

Mr. Travis Wing: We also make it a point to engage the female leaders in our community and in our city to help fuel our initiative. We know that this is not something we can do alone as guys. We think it's important that the males in our group are the ones sending this message from the front end, but at every juncture, we have been working with women all along the way.

We were inspired initially by Mr. Leach's wife, who works in victim support, in a nursing role, I guess, from a medical standpoint. Then we connected with OCTEVAW, who is the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women. Those ladies were helping provide the much-needed content for our bring a buddy to lunches. We bring them in to help us with training. Julie Lalonde, who is somebody you're going to hear from twice today, comes in and works with us regularly. She does sessions on consent with our group and then expands in other groups.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Gentlemen, you have one minute remaining.

Mr. Travis Wing: Okay. Thank you.

We've really benefited from having that partnership.

I guess, with a minute left here, the pretext of the day, or the concept here, is to make a recommendation on our experiences. From a leadership standpoint in this group, I think the main takeaway here, if I'm looking from a provincial level—oh, I should go on to the moving-forward thing.

We've managed to engage 21 schools at this point, committed to running our program in various schools. We hosted a conference. We brought Glen back in and we re-created that moment of inspiration, because first and foremost, the kids—you've heard from these three outstanding guys here. I think the kids are the key to this whole thing. If we can get these young people involved and inspired, then they're potentially the most powerful tool that we have in this province to create change. If we can provide them a structure for them to do their work, then we can see some real serious difference and some real serious change.

I would love to see a broad commitment to these conferences, where we're going and giving our model to various schools across the province. We've been to Port Elgin, Ontario. We've been to Owen Sound. We've been to Georgetown, Ontario. We have schools in Kingston that are committed to going.

This is based on 12 kids' work and two teachers' free time, which is extremely limited. We're doing our best within our context, but we've built something that works and that other people want to buy into—and I think we're just getting started. As part of our Inspire conference, we inspired our next group of 12 kids, who are sitting back at the school right now, ready to do this whole thing again next year.

For this program, being cyclical is a major part of it, so that it doesn't stop and doesn't go away, because this change isn't happening overnight. This change is going to happen over the course of maybe a decade. So we're committed to doing that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Incredible. I loved the whole thing. If we can help you spread the word to all the other school boards, and to motivate the young men in those schools, I'm all for it.

Do you have anything else to add? You did a great job in presenting what your program is about, so if you want my time to add anything else, you go ahead.

Mr. Travis Wing: No. I guess if we want to talk about barriers—like, we're tired. There are two of us, and that's a real barrier. We're trying to do this, and I love the idea of going to your riding and talking to schools in your board, but there are some serious limitations on teachers and our time and our resources.

We are going to do our best, and keep doing our best, and thankfully, we have some really supportive administrators and superintendents.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Would they write to the other school boards?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sorry—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Oh, we're out of time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You know what? You can answer, but we're going to have about 30 seconds for each caucus after that.

Mr. Travis Wing: Okay. Sorry.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We can talk later, but any other plan that we can help you with, to write to directors—whatever you suggest. Thanks.

Mr. Travis Wing: Perfect. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much. It has inspired me, the program that you've talked about.

I'm curious to know: Do you get any pushback from other students at the school?

Mr. Travis Wing: Like I mentioned before, one thing that a lot of people ask was—and one thing we were somewhat worried about—was there going to be any pushback? That Instagram case I previously mentioned, I think, is proof that in fact what we're doing is being accepted and being spread by other students in our school.

So far, we haven't heard any negative feedback from any of our students. It's only positive, and I think that's great. Hopefully, that's what it's going to continue being, moving forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you for your presentation. I actually heard about you two days ago, before I came here, at a community developers' meeting. I'm from Ottawa South. I think you're going into Ridgemont. Do you go into Ridgemont?

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes, 100%, we're in there.

Mr. John Fraser: That's great. I just want to congratulate you on how you've organically grown this.

I'd be interested in knowing—you don't have to answer the question right now—what your ideas are to

help continue to grow that. It's great that you've done it organically, and there are probably ways that all sorts of people can lend you more support to assist your getting it out there.

Mr. Travis Wing: A quick, short answer is we're just doing our best. When people help us do our best, that's awesome, so let's keep talking. That's great.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm being told by our Clerk that our next presenter is not here, nor the one after that.

Our next presenter, going down the list, is the Carleton University Graduate Students' Association. I'm told that you are here. Can I see a show of hands? Are you prepared to come forward now and give your presentation?

Ms. Alannah James: Is it okay if we do our scheduled time?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, you absolutely can.

Since we are waiting for our next presenters, we can continue the conversation. I apologize for being so abrupt and cutting people off.

If we have any of our committee members who want to ask further questions, we can continue this conversation. MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Hi. I'm Han Dong from Trinity-Spadina riding in Toronto. I'm going to give you my card later on. I just want to connect—

Laughter.

Mr. Han Dong: Yes, my colleague is laughing.

I just want to make sure we connect. I think this is something that my local school board, the TDSB, can really benefit from—

Mr. Travis Wing: I've got a guy in TDSB who is already on this. That's good. We should talk, for sure.

0820

Mr. Han Dong: Especially with these young gentlemen called the ManUp crews, I think you guys are making it really cool to be convincing role models in school and really spreading the word. You just gave testimony that other kids are responding to this very well.

I know that you have barriers like—

Interruption.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): That's your BlackBerry.

Mr. Han Dong: I don't have a BlackBerry.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): It's somebody's BlackBerry.

Mr. Han Dong: Okay. Anyway, I'm just wondering—you're doing this all volunteer? What about the t-shirts and the flyers? Do you have sponsors? What's your funding model right now?

Mr. Travis Wing: Our funding model is limited to a donation from Crime Prevention Ottawa. They give us \$5,000 to work with. It's also sort of on the heels of Glen Canning's generosity that we've been able to do a lot of this. There is some additional help from the superintendent to get supply teacher time, supply teacher coverage. There is another organization—other people

are funding us to take our show on the road, like when we went to Port Elgin and Georgetown. The other schools are paying our way there, which is really helpful. But as far as my time and my partner's time are concerned, it's mostly chasing down quarters and nickels to make sure that it's all paid for. It's really tricky.

Mr. Han Dong: My second question is just to understand this initiative from the young gentlemen better. What's your incentive in being part of this? Why did you sign up?

Mr. Euan Scofield: I think that, like you mentioned, to be a leader in our school. We want to change what the social norm is for students such as ourselves, and even younger generations. I think that what the social norm is right now is that it's not cool to do that, and we want to be that change. We want to say, "Well, it is cool," and I think we are making that difference, slowly but surely. I think that's one thing that all guys like myself and the other 11 guys in this group want to do: We want to leave our legacy in this school as the guys who really tried to make a change. Hopefully that will leave the younger generations with a feeling that, "Well, we have to continue this."

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you. I applaud that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP McMahon?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: You've inspired me before 8:30. Well done. Excellent. I'm looking at you and I have faith and inspiration in the next generation. You guys are amazing.

I have a nephew who's in grade 11. I love him—he's my nephew—but he's a little too cool for school sometimes, if you know what I'm saying. We have these conversations, and I know he feels like you do, so I can't wait to get home and tell him about what you're doing, because I think part of it—I think you've touched the nail on the head, so I'd love if you could expand on this a little bit. In terms of sowing the seeds of changing the culture at your school and beyond, I don't think it's cool in a lot of places, and what you guys have done is you've blown that right out of the water. You've made it cool, as Han was saying, to do this, to be leaders and to be inspirational to guys in grade 9 who are behind you and looking up to you. I think that's really cool.

Mr. Euan Scofield: Yes, and that's exactly our point. Of course we want to be that change. We want to be that cool role model.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes.

Mr. Euan Scofield: Honestly, though, it's not the easiest job in a high school environment, where everyone is going to be judging you. Everyone is looking at what you're doing—all your actions, all your choices—and it's a big deal.

I think that we're lucky enough that we have great people on our side. We have people who are willing to watch our backs. We have great teachers, we have great supervisors who are all willing to help us. I think that's a huge, critical part of what we're doing.

Now, one thing that we like to mention a lot in all our meetings and all our discussions is that the general theme

is the bystander effect. I'm sure that you all understand what that is. That's a big deal that we face in high school, because we don't want to get judged by others. We don't want to be critiqued by other people, because for us there's a lot of self-esteem issues, there's a lot of other stuff growing up, especially at our age.

What we're trying to get across to these students who perhaps don't feel comfortable manning up or standing up to the people who are doing wrong is that we have your back—not only us 12 guys, but it should be everyone who is going to be dedicated and involved in this program. I think that if people realize that we have their back, that there's someone who's going to be helping them, someone who's going to be there to catch them when they fall—we're not going to judge them. If anything, we're going to help them move forward. I think that will give people the confidence to say something, step up and get involved.

Mr. Travis Wing: Another aspect of that, just talking about cool-ifying standing up, I guess—that photo there is of Mika Zibanejad. He's a player on the Ottawa Senators. He's gotten this to the Senators team: 15 of those guys wear these shirts and want to be part of our efforts. The Carleton University basketball team was at our conference and they want to be part of our efforts. When we put them on stage and we put them in the spotlight via social media or whatever, that's how we define "cool." That's how the young men are defining "cool." If these guys are willing to put our logo and our mark on coolness, then that's a major win. So we don't take those connections lightly at all.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm sorry, Laurie; I'll be fast. Say someone gave you a pot of money right now and they came forward and said, "Here's \$10,000," or \$15,000, and say, just for fun, that that's provincial funding. Someone says, "Here's some money to help." It seems to me that one thing you might do with that—I'd be interested in hearing what you might do, because that's the point. But it seems to me taking this program, replicating it—I wish that we could clone you all, but since that's not possible, is there a way to help you replicate it and take it to other schools? Because it's tough for you to leave Ottawa all the time and travel around the province. Let's build some capacity in other communities. How can we help you do that?

Mr. Travis Wing: I think the answer to that is built into our original design, and that had to do with the cyclical design of expanding. The idea here is, if we can, we have our ManUp Inspire Conference that we just had—the first one was tremendously successful. We were talking to 400 kids, and we had an intimate discussion with each of them. Then we took their teachers aside and we trained the teachers on how to run this program. We gave them a toolkit. We got in touch with social media, and they are ready to rock, starting in September. They're going to do the exact same steps that we are.

If I was looking at a big-picture system for our program, it would be to have a series of these conferences, in

the bigger cities at first. It's almost a network marketing approach without a financial structure, but it does really well. Some of the really keen schools in the city want their own independent business model. They're going to run their own Inspire conference and they're going to bring 10 schools, and I'm like, "Oh, that's awesome." If we can get 10 schools to bring 10 schools, and then the next year they all bring 10 schools, within five years we have every school in the province. If it's done—somebody mentioned the word "organic." That sounds like a pretty organic growth model.

Funding these conferences in the various cities and bringing in our partners, like Glen, and then bring some of our guys back—I think that would make this move really quickly and real powerfully.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Scott has another question.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Sure. As you've reached out to school boards—I assume you have—are you getting pushback at all? Are you getting interest?

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes. Well, there have been some people who are reluctant. They think that this is a risky business to be in because we're focusing on the males and they think it's perhaps chauvinistic, or misogynistic, even. Those people we try and engage in further conversation rather than ignore them because they just don't understand what we're doing.

The other major pushback we've had and that we need help with is breaching the French school boards. We had several schools lined up, and they said, "Are any of your presentations going to be in French?" We said, "Excusez. Non." That's a tough one.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: But we're going to work on that.

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes, we're working on it already. That started this morning.

Ms. Laurie Scott: When the directors of education or the Ontario principals meet, can you go to presentations? Have you thought that far down? It's just spreading the word, right? Not every school is going to engage. I have a couple of schools where I would want to make it mandatory myself. Have you got to that stage yet, or how do you think we could help you?

Mr. Travis Wing: We did speak at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board leadership conference. We spoke to every principal and superintendent and we even had Jennifer Adams, the director of education, in that conversation. So that was step one. Again, it's a little bit slow, because we are trying to build this organically, but I don't think there's any other way than having those small conversations with those people. She had said that she wanted to take this as far as she can take it. So we're still waiting to hear. If we ever have an audience like that—we would love to have an audience of more superintendents and more directors of education, absolutely, 100%.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. We've got your card, and I certainly will try for it back in my area of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

Mr. Travis Wing: That's where my cottage is. Awesome.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Sorry?

Mr. Travis Wing: I've got a place to stay.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Everybody has a cottage there. Excellent; okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you're not in any hurry, we'll continue to fill time here. MPP Malhi?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you. Your presentation was absolutely amazing. I was on a school board prior to being elected as an MPP, so I had the opportunity to see a number of leadership programs, but nothing like this. I was with the Peel District School Board, and I was going to say that I'd be happy to go back to the school board and try to talk to our director out there—we're the second-biggest board in Ontario—to see what could be done and how they could take on your initiatives.

Do you have a module or anything that you send forward? Did you say that it was like a kit? What does the kit entail?

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes, we have a tool kit that we're super-protective of—not because we don't want other people doing our thing; we specifically do want other people doing our thing. We're protective of it because, if it's not presented in the same means as we would like to have it presented, then it's going to be silenced. The RCMP national youth program wanted to take our manual and put it in every school across the country or whatever and just plop it on a desk. I said, "If you want to kill our program, that's the way to do it."

Our toolkit has a step-by-step method to create that forum for the kids to be their own leaders. It talks about the major principles. It talks about creating an inspirational moment for the kids, and it talks about working with that inspiration. It's growing, too. Again, this is being done at midnight. This is a typical day for me: waking up at 5 to make ManUp work, to get these kids organized, go and teach a school day, then go home at night and, "Let's recap today and try to sort out what happened." That, again, is something that's happening slowly. We're working on it.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you. As a teacher, you do an incredible job—

Mr. Travis Wing: That's my old school board, Peel district. That's awesome. I need to get there. I still have connections there.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: So do I, so we'll definitely connect and try to get you guys into the board to see what—Director Pontes or a few of the principals I can think of off the top of my head would definitely be interested. They've posted male leadership programs in the past; they haven't been as successful. But something like this, with a module to follow, will definitely encourage them. Thank you.

Mr. Travis Wing: Great; thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Malhi, you're in the Brampton area?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Brampton is in the Peel board. We cover Caledon, Brampton and Mississauga.

Mr. Travis Wing: Awesome.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any more questions from any other committee members?

You're free to go.

Mr. Travis Wing: Thanks, everyone.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Members, we're going to stand in recess until our next presenter arrives.

The committee recessed from 0832 to 0836.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, we have our next presenter. I'm going to ask that you all have your seats so we can resume.

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our presenter from the Canadian Federation of Students to come forward.

Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable; pour yourself a glass of water if you like. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and then that will be followed by some questions for you. Please begin by stating your name for the record and the organization that you represent.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Certainly. Thank you. My name is Bilan Arte and I'm here on behalf of the Canadian Federation of Students.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Good morning, everyone. I wanted to start off by saying thank you for having me here and inviting me to speak on this very important topic.

As mentioned, my name is Bilan Arte. I'm the national deputy chairperson for the Canadian Federation of Students. For those of you who don't know, our federation represents over 600,000 members across Canada. I'm honoured to be able to speak today on a very difficult but very important subject matter.

This will certainly not be news, I think, to most of the folks who are in this room, but the issue of sexual and gendered violence on university and college campuses is nothing new. In fact, as students and organizers and activists across this country know all too well, the rape culture that we see manifesting itself on campuses, we see as a symptom of a wider societal issue of misogyny and sexism, and one that certainly needs to be addressed.

I'm here today to provide some perspectives from students on how we can effectively address this problem. I'm going to provide, through my presentation, an overview of what's happening on campuses across the country, as we are a nationally based organization. Then I'm going to talk a little bit more specifically about some of the work that folks have been doing right here in Ontario and how it relates to the provincial action plan that your government has developed. Finally, I'm going to offer some final remarks and recommendations on how we can move forward on working together to ensure that we can eradicate the presence of rape culture on our campuses.

First off, as mentioned, the Canadian Federation of Students is the organization that has been working on,

amongst a million other campaigns, the issue of sexual and gendered violence on campus. In fact, one of our longest-running campaigns is the "No Means No" campaign. It's been running since before I was born. It has been running for about 30 years now.

Interjections.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Yes. It's a true testament, I think, to the important work that students have been doing across this country to continue to challenge social norms around sexism, around misogyny, and how they manifest themselves through sexual and gendered violence on our campuses.

The "No Means No" campaign has centred around a variety of different actions that students have taken on, on campuses, including the creation of physically accessible spaces like women's centres, talking about gender-inclusive spaces on campus and talking about the importance of queer-positive spaces on campus. It has meant students taking action on campus and in our communities by organizing Take Back the Night marches, by organizing rallies to demonstrate in support of students' rights to choose when it comes to matters that affect their own bodies, and it has meant students taking on hosting and pushing very critical discussions on our campuses about what it means to be diverse and to have a diverse student body and a diverse campus community, and what it means to not just accept but celebrate all identities and think about how we can be as inclusive as possible of all of the experiences that folks have, once they enter our institutions and become involved members of our campus community.

As part of the reason why we're here today, the issue of sexual violence on campus has certainly gained quite a bit of momentum in the media as of late. I think that folks around the table are quite familiar with the real media break that happened about a year and a half ago around the rape chants that were uncovered at Saint Mary's University in Nova Scotia and at the University of British Columbia.

Again, I may be preaching a little bit to the choir here, but I think that, as many of us will admit, these aren't new issues. Although we recognize and certainly appreciate the momentum that is happening right now, where folks are more interested and there's more of a public discourse on the issue of rape culture on campus, we recognize that this isn't an issue that is isolated to specific campuses or to specific communities. It's an issue that students are facing on campuses across this country, and it's something that needs to be addressed, as mentioned previously, as it is a symptom of a wider societal issue that we have with sexual violence in our society today.

As I mentioned, we're very grateful for the momentum. Actually, one of the things that has been quite important and central to the work that we've been doing as a federation is ensuring that students are at the centre of the message when we're talking about how we address the issue of sexual and gendered violence on campus.

Our federation hosted a national student forum on consent. It was actually called Consent Culture, and it

was held right here in Ottawa, a couple of blocks away, at the Delta hotel. It was held in March. It was an incredible opportunity to bring together over 100 dedicated student activists who had been working on this issue on their campuses and to talk, over the course of two days, about what it means to build a consent culture on our campuses; about what it means to not only challenge rape culture but to build a meaningful dialogue, a meaningful alternative; about what consent means, what consent education can look like and should look like, and how that can, hopefully, affect and combat the issue of rape culture on our campuses, so that we're not just moving away from one specific subculture but we're moving towards something that is much more celebratory of all of our identities and all of our experiences, and that can actually enhance the quality of the education that we are receiving.

We talked at length about the fact that when we talk about the rising cost of post-secondary education, we talk about the costs that are associated with tuition fees and high student debt, but we oftentimes don't see very much public discussion about the importance of those spaces also being physically accessible and being spaces that students from all different backgrounds and all different identities feel included—and, more so, safe—within. If students don't feel safe on campus, then the idea of an accessible education becomes further and further a myth. So it's very important for us not only that our institutions remain accessible in the financial sense of that term, but that they remain physically accessible to all students as well.

One of the most important things that came out of our student forum was a national student vision on ending sexual violence on campus, which really emphasized a holistic approach around education, policy and support. The exciting thing is that since then, we've been able to work on a national level, on a national framework.

Many of you folks might be familiar with a motion that was recently put forth in the House right here in Ottawa, and that is Bill 444. It was presented by a member of Parliament, Niki Ashton, and it presents a national strategy on ending violence against women in Canada.

It includes, as well, a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women—of course, recognizing within that strategy—and we do this, as well, within our campaigns—that the violence we see, in particular sexual and gendered violence, has insidiously had a larger impact and a larger experience particularly within those communities that find themselves more socially and economically marginalized in our communities already. We're talking about indigenous students, when we're talking about campus-specific examples, and the queer and trans students on campuses, in addition to racialized students. That has been incredible work that we've been able to see, and the momentum at a national level.

Also, just to talk a little bit about another province, in Nova Scotia we've seen legislation recently proposed around ensuring some accountability from institutions

towards actually reporting issues of sexual assault and sexual violence on campus, and actually legislating that they take measures toward ending that. We are thankful for the momentum that we're seeing across this country toward actually working on the issue of sexual violence.

I'm going to bring this back to Ontario, as I'm sure that that is likely the area that's of most interest to this committee. One thing that I'm very glad to see as a national student representative is the fact that this government has made a priority of working with students. Hopefully that is something that governments across this country use as an example and take a lead on when they're talking about—we've certainly seen this momentum. We know that other governments across this country are talking about what's happening right here in this province, the national strategy that has come up and, more importantly, the work that's been done to include students in that process, so before I go any further on that subject, I just wanted to say thank you for doing that.

I think that we're really excited to continue to work with you, both through our representative bodies as the Canadian Federation of Students, but I think as students as a whole we find that it's very important that policy development and the work that is done to better improve the experience that we're having on our campuses regularly and meaningfully—I'll emphasize the word "meaningfully," because that's not often the kind of involvement that we see—that that work continues to happen.

In Ontario, students have been working with their institutions, have lobbied for a very long time and are excited with the newly presented action plan to see the development of stand-alone and rigorous policies to address the issue of sexual violence on campus in a preventive manner, not just reacting to incidents as they happen and as they are reported by the media, but actually taking a stance towards developing structures and strategies on campus to prevent those issues from happening and to build a consent culture on campus.

Students in this province have identified three further recommendations to the work that has already been done. They've recommended the creation of a sexual assault support division within the government of Ontario. Essentially, this provides a framework for the government, and for governments to come, to continue to prioritize this issue. As I've said before, I've been quite grateful for the momentum that we've seen on this issue in the last couple of years in public discourse, in the media and within government, but it's very important that this is an issue that continues to be addressed, that the strategies and policies that are being proposed today continue to be evaluated, that we continue to have conversations like these to ensure that we're actually moving in the best direction and to ensure that we're moving towards a space where we can create more physically accessible and safer campuses.

We know that the issue of sexual violence is not something that we're going to be able to solve tomorrow, but being able to have dedicated space within govern-

ment to develop these policies and to also think about the question of funding goes into our second recommendation: actually having funds available for post-secondary institutions, for colleges and universities in this province to apply for, that would be governed by the support division, that could enhance existing programs or help create and develop new education programs on campuses, around consent, for example, and around sexual assault prevention, to provide training and support services for survivors on campus, and to actually support student-led initiatives or peer-to-peer initiatives that often at times don't have access to the funding and the resources that they need in order to be successful on campus.

Being able to administer those funds is one of the things that the sexual assault support division within this government could do. We recommend, at least for now, a \$6-million investment in that work, so that we can ensure that every institution in this province has the means necessary to be able to really live up to some of the goals that we've set in terms of actually combatting—and effectively combatting—sexual and gendered violence on campus.

Our third recommendation is to institute mandatory consent education, ensuring that the education that is received around consent is developed in conjunction with the campus community—that includes student groups, and that also includes faculty groups, staff groups and other groups on campus that are stakeholders—and ensuring that we actually have education, in the first couple of weeks of school especially.

We know—and research shows this; it's not just anecdotal—that a majority of sexual assault and sexual violence incidents happen within the first couple of weeks of school starting, so it is so important, right when a student is learning about the ABCs of their post-secondary institution and what they need to know in order to be a successful student on that campus, that they know they have access to resources and support should anything happen to them or to anyone they know, and that they also know what consent means and what we're actually talking about—not just relying on our community to be able to provide that education, but that we actually provide dedicated space and dedicated strategy towards ensuring that education and training happens on campuses.

0850

Those are some of the recommendations that students have put forth. Something I wanted to emphasize as well when speaking to this committee is that I think that—and I've mentioned this, I think, quite a few times now—the issue of sexual and gendered violence and the way that we see rape culture manifesting itself on our campuses is certainly a symptom of a wider societal issue. But we have a very unique opportunity, I think, on post-secondary campuses because they're public spaces that are governed and that are supported and that are talked about through committees like these and through our government. These are spaces where we actually have the opportunity to provide a very meaningful impact.

Myself and many of my peers go towards a university or a college education, go to our post-secondary institutions, in an attempt not only to learn the skills and education that we need in order to be active and successful workers—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Okay—but we also go there in order to learn more about what we need to do in order to be successful and active members of our communities and of our societies.

Just in closing I'll say this: I think the work that's happening in this government and in this province today is fantastic. I think that students are very happy to have had the opportunity to work with you folks thus far. We're looking forward to continuing to have those opportunities hopefully in the future.

I want to thank you for having me, and I would welcome any questions that you folks have. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for your very animated and enthusiastic presentation. The voice of students is critical in any kind of successful implementation of these strategies.

One of the things that this committee heard a lot about is that the Occupational Health and Safety Act requires workplaces to have a policy, but it doesn't have any kind of oversight over what is in the policy. How do we hold post-secondary institutions accountable for actually having meaningful policies that will address some of the issues that you've raised: preventing and changing rape culture on campus?

Ms. Bilan Arte: Am I able to respond directly?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Absolutely.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Okay. Thank you for the question.

I think that is in fact part and parcel of why we recommend the first item that I talked about, so the creation of a sexual assault support division within the government of Ontario: to not only compile and provide all relevant information around sexual assault prevention on campus—and that can include working with institutions to develop curriculum around consent education—but it would also provide an accountability measure. It will provide a space within government for there to be discussions around how we enforce a strategy like the one that's been discussed within Ontario and how we hold institutions and individual administrations accountable.

As you've mentioned, we know that not all administrations are going to be as willing to go through the work that some of us have outlined here today, but I think that actually having stand-alone space within the workings of this government to provide for those discussions to happen—and to provide for discussions around what enforcement looks like—is going to be able to provide us with the mechanisms and an outside body, outside of just

our administrations, to be able to appeal to if we find that our administrations are in fact not acting in the best interests of students when it comes to sexual assault prevention.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much for your presentation this morning.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Thank you.

Mr. John Fraser: And I agree: a very animated, excellent presentation.

I wanted to ask you two questions. First of all, you were talking about working with the colleges and universities in terms of building stand-alone policies. I just want to know what the uptake is like on that in terms of how quickly you're moving forward with—I know you said very positive things about what's happening in Ontario, but what's your sense on the ground as to how administrations are taking this?

Ms. Bilan Arte: We've seen quite a bit of momentum. I'm glad that you've raised that issue because we've actually seen this sort of disturbing trend where institutions are trying to get a policy out there as soon as possible because they're trying to get ahead of a story. Unfortunately, a lot of our administrations and a lot of our institutions are governed by a practice where they're very concerned about their self-image. In a sense it's good; it's very important that we have institutions that are working on the issue of sexual violence, and yes, it does, I think, make an institution look better to a family that's considering it if they know that institution takes the issue of sexual violence seriously, but sometimes they're not as inclusive of the wider campus community as they could be in the development of these policies. Particularly, we've seen institutions not really include students in the policy development process as much as they should have been, and that's why I emphasize the idea of meaningful consultation and meaningful involvement.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for being here. Which university—are you at one of the universities? Did I miss that?

Ms. Bilan Arte: I'm actually from the University of Manitoba, but I work here in Ottawa now, as we're a nationally based organization.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. Very good. Do you see anything different that happens in the universities in Manitoba, as opposed to—

Ms. Bilan Arte: No.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Not really? Okay. So we're all kind of on the same page.

We've heard from different students at universities. Some have better set-ups. It was kind of shocking, when we started this, that there weren't the areas, the dedicated staff. There wasn't a coordinated approach on campus when sexual assault occurs. It seems to vary from province to province.

You're promoting a framework to be done across all the universities, and the dollar value you put on it is

something that you roughly figured it might cost to do. I think you said a \$6-million investment.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Is that for all the universities, a province-wide plan? Are you talking with the other universities? I'm just trying to get a grasp of—

Ms. Bilan Arte: Definitely. The \$6-million investment is specifically for the province of Ontario. What we're hoping is that that will provide a fund for different initiatives on campus that either need more resources or need resources to get off the ground.

We recognize that not all institutions have the funds or resources necessary to be able to support this work on campus. As public institutions, we find that they should have access to public resources. If, for whatever reason, an institution does not have sufficient resources on its own to be able to carry forth consent education, or training on consent issues or sexual assault prevention, if they have access to a fund that they can apply for that is governed by the sexual assault support division, that would give them access to funds and resources to be able to carry out that type of programming on campus.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Bilan, thank you very much for your presentation this morning to this committee. I invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience and to hear our next presenter.

PROSTITUTES OF OTTAWA/GATINEAU WORK, EDUCATE, RESIST

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to invite forward Frédérique Chabot. Please come forward. Make yourself comfortable. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and then we're going to ask you some questions. Please state for the record the name of your organization and repeat your name.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: My name is Frédérique Chabot. I'm a member of POWER. POWER stands for Prostitutes of Ottawa/Gatineau Work, Educate, Resist. We're an advocacy group located here in Ottawa.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I want to tell our committee members, too, that the 8:20 presenter was not able to be here for family reasons, but you may be speaking on behalf of that person.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: I will do my best.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Begin any time.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Just a quick introduction about who we are and the kind of work that we do here in our city: POWER was founded in 2008 in response to a new policing tactic that had been introduced in our city and how it was framed at the time was to "clean the streets" of Ottawa, language that has been tied to increases in violence. If you see research from Simon Fraser University on the language of the discourse of disposal, that kind of language around street sweeps and cleaning streets is really problematic and is very clearly linked to increases in situational and predatory violence

in a city when that starts to happen. So in response to something that was emerging in our city at that time, sex workers here locally decided to start to organize and see what they could do to better their relationships with institutions in the city and address some problematic relationships with some of these institutions, including the Ottawa Police Service.

At the time, to determine what kind of group POWER would be, there was some small community-based research that was organized here in the city. It was done in conjunction with a professor at the University of Ottawa. She recruited sex workers themselves, and their allies, family members and community members, to be research coordinators and interviewers. She trained them to do that research here in the city and to develop, as well, the questions that were going to be posed to sex workers working in the region here. Then these people were scattered around the city to snowball the research.

0900

What was supposed to be a very small needs assessment to decide what kind of group POWER would be at that point—would it distribute soup and warm socks; would it be an advocacy group or a service organization etc.?—ended up being a much bigger project, because of the richness of the data that we managed to gather, because of the fact that community members were interviewing their peers.

A year after this research was started, we published a report called *Challenges: Ottawa Area Sex Workers Speak Out*. It's available on our website, if members of the committee are interested in reading it, at powerottawa.ca. It maps out challenges encountered by sex workers here in the city of Ottawa when it comes to the workplace, clients, access to services, violence, criminalization and police.

What was very interesting was that one of the main findings—it was surprising; out of all of the topics that were touched on by the interviewers, 100% of the street-based workers who were interviewed and a good number of the indoor workers identified police as one of their main challenges in working in Ottawa. What came from that was that we filed a request for an inquiry by the Ontario Human Rights Commission to look into the policing of sex work in the city of Ottawa. That was in 2010, and they did come to our city to interview a lot of stakeholders in this particular situation.

All of this was to map out the kind of work that we ended up doing. We decided to stay unfunded; it's a volunteer-based organization that is directed by and for sex workers and their very close allies. We are an advocacy group working around the criminalization of sex work and trying to address emerging and pressing issues for sex workers here in Ottawa.

Obviously one of the main challenges that we are trying to tackle is the criminalization of sex work and how it impacts people's access to resources, including police protection. This is why we're here today to talk about this, because there are thousands of pages of research, there is a lot of experiential knowledge that was

shared, and there is the Bedford ruling, which does speak to the fact that the current way that we police sex work—in Ontario, but in Canada widely—has an impact on violence experienced by certain members of our community. To build on the excellent presentation that was right before mine, which highlighted how some communities are affected in different ways when we're talking about sexual or gendered violence, I'm here today to speak to the violence experienced by sex workers in Ontario.

Our Premier has brought attention to the fact that she was very concerned about the new prostitution laws. We're here to speak to that and to confirm that we are also concerned as a community and are hoping to continue to build relationships with elected officials and people working who do have a very real impact on policies and how we can facilitate access to protection for certain communities that are at risk of increased violence.

Very briefly, there are four main provisions that criminalize sex work. I'm not really going to touch on them in much detail because it's a conversation that has been ongoing nationally. There are a lot of ways to inform ourselves, and I don't want to assume that members have not followed a lot of the story in the past couple of years.

I still want to briefly talk about how section 213, the communications provision, has been reintroduced by the new prostitution laws—a little bit tweaked, but barely, really, with a similar intended impact on women and on people in the sex industry. It is worth mentioning that in Canada, 95% of prostitution charges are communication charges—at least, historically that was the case—so we are policing a very small subset of sex workers: the ones who work on the street. In Ottawa, it would be about 5% of the industry; Canada-wide, it's estimated that it's about 5% to 20%. A very small number of people in the industry are overly policed. It's mostly linked to poverty and presence on the street.

In Ottawa, that's definitely a trend that's true. Communication charges are the most common ones. If I may, I would describe an interaction with police when it comes to communication charges, at least until the new laws came on, because right now we're assessing what the enforcement of the new laws is looking like.

Here in Ottawa, a lot of women would be caught during street sweeps by police officers who would pose as clients and then bring a woman into their car and start negotiating sexual services, because that's the part that's illegal.

Communicating in public for the exchange of sexual services is difficult to prove, so sometimes it was reported, and it is reflected in the Challenges report, that police officers would use techniques that really speak to the fact that in our culture we consider sex workers to be unrapeable. So they would use techniques like, if a sex worker was worried about a police officer being a police officer, she would ask, "Are you a member of the police?" Then police officers would touch the women or ask them to touch them to prove that they were not

police—leading to charges that way. It was a tactic that was discussed pretty openly by police as something that was not problematic in their eyes. That's captured in a few community-based research here in Ottawa.

So it speaks to how we view certain people when it comes to sexual violence and dichotomize victims in terms of good victims and bad victims, and sex workers are definitely falling squarely into one of the camps.

Provision 286.2 is the new provision that criminalizes material benefits. I'm not going to touch on it because Bedford clearly ruled it unconstitutional. It's back in our Criminal Code now, but there is a lot of ink that has been spent on that one.

Advertising being criminalized is a new thing. It was introduced in the new set of laws by the federal government. One concern for sex worker communities is that spaces where sex workers gather to advertise are now made illegal. These are spaces where, when you are isolated in your profession, you can gather with people who can share information with you, including information about bad dates, bad clients, violent clients etc., so people can take measures to protect themselves as they continue working. That's now made more difficult for sex workers.

Provision 286.1: That's the most controversial one, the criminalization of the purchase of sexual services. That's completely new. That basically criminalizes all interactions between clients and sex workers in Canada, effectively making sex work illegal for the first time. We do have data on the impact of such measures that comes from Canada, so we don't even necessarily need to look outside of our boundaries to understand what that looks like, because in some cities the criminalization of clients has started a long time ago, a few years at least in some cities. Vancouver, for example, is one.

There was an article that was published in the medical journal *BMJ Open* on the impact of criminalizing clients on sex workers. What was remarked was that it recreates the same conditions that put people at increased risk of violence, so a greater displacement for street-based sex workers; greater scrutiny by police, which means that clients are nervous, people have to jump into cars; there's no time to assess a client, to discuss what you consent to and what you don't consent to; there's no time to negotiate safer sex supplies. Often, people in Vancouver remarked that they're now taken out of their familiar neighbourhoods to be brought to isolated areas because clients are nervous about police detection.

0910

So it has been linked, in Montreal as well, with increased instances of situational violence and predatory violence because people are very aware that sex workers, to avoid being profiled as sex workers so they don't have their clients identified, refuse to go to the police for protection. People are very aware of that. Individually, all these laws are problematic, in our opinion. But it's together, as well, that they work in a way to create really dangerous working conditions for many Ontarians who are put at a very high risk of situational or predatory violence.

We are here, again, to continue to raise red flags around this legislation and around the enforcement of these problematic laws in Ontario. That's already, we know, a discussion that is happening with our elected officials. We're very grateful for that, and we hope to continue that conversation and we hope to be sitting at the table with people who can have a real impact on developing that conversation, in Ontario and also at the national level, to ensure that we are the kind of society that does address very real contributing factors in terms of facing violence for certain communities in our province.

Another thing I'd like to touch on because it's definitely timely is the conflation of sex work with human trafficking, consensual sex work being discussed as if it was interchangeable with instances of exploitation, of human trafficking. We do believe that it does not serve sex workers or victims of human trafficking to discuss these two issues as the same thing, and we do believe that in some instances it's used with very specific political aims.

What it looks like in real life in a city in Ontario when we do talk of human trafficking and conflate it with sex work or do not consider how it could impact sex workers in our city—we do have some examples here in Ottawa—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Thank you. So we've had two operations that were conducted here in our city that ended up in a more difficult relationship with our police service here. The first one was called Northern Spotlight. It was a nation-wide operation that was conducted last January, I believe, or last February. In Ottawa it looked like raids in the homes and the workplaces of escorts. Police posed as clients and showed up at their appointments, and when the sex worker would open the door, possibly in her work attire, four big police officers in all their gear would enter her apartment to possibly—at least we have a few recorded instances where police searched the premises to try to assess if there was any exploitation but ended up spooking sex workers. There was quite a push-back from sex workers here about how it continued to deteriorate the trust between sex workers and the police service: the fact that they posed as clients and the fact that they visited their homes like that with no prior assessment of possible exploitation.

The second one happened a couple of weeks ago. I'm going to talk as fast as I can. The human trafficking unit here in Ottawa investigated 20 massage parlours, and they did mention in the media that it was responding to public complaints. That resulted in 11 women being deported. As we have seen a report coming out of Toronto and Vancouver, 100% of Chinese workers working in massage parlours do not call the police when they're victims of assault, sexual assault, robbery, because they fear possible deportation, retaliation and charges. So we have seen here the problematic conflation and how it actually impacts people's access to police protection.

That certainly is a contributing factor to sexual violence and gendered violence experienced by sex workers in Canada.

That is certainly compounded when people are in situations of intersection, of marginalization, such as racialized workers, indigenous workers, migrant workers and poor workers working on the street. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Committee members, I do want to encourage you again, and just to add, to our new committee members who have just joined us, to be very concise with your questions today. MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Merci d'être ici.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Merci.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you. And I'm going to go straight to the question because I want to make sure: What are some of the best practices in prevention of violence against and support for women in the sex trade?

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: There are a few places in Canada, but also in New Zealand, for example, where sex work has been decriminalized, where the police have been working very closely with advocacy groups representing sex workers to develop ways to respond to such instances.

I would invite you to look at the case of a woman in New Zealand who just won a settlement of \$30,000 after suing her employer in a massage parlour for sexual harassment. That was done with the support of the police in her city. This was the first time that it was achieved, that there was a real way to address violence experienced in the workplace by sex workers—a protection that should be afforded to all citizens.

In terms of what is happening right now, as sex work is criminalized, here in Ottawa we have developed relationships with very specific police officers who have gone beyond their duties to ensure that people can access police protection and can navigate the system, even though they may have, at the time, pending charges, red zones, probations etc., that would have precluded an easy access to protection—so, every step of the way, being by their side, and in certain instances, visiting clients who had threatened sex workers etc.

Happily, it works very well to rely on these relationships. Sadly, when these officers move out of their positions, we lose an entire system of protection for sex workers, which has happened a couple of times here in Ottawa, and I know that it has certainly happened in Toronto.

Merci.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott—or MPP Hillier? MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I wanted to give you the opportunity: Is there anything else you wanted to add? We only have such short moments that if there's anything you missed in your presentation, go ahead and hit the point for us, because it's your time.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Thank you very much. That's very nice. What I would have added was to rap home how the criminalization of sex work, regardless of where we stand, does feed the stigma and the discrimination that sex workers face, not only from public institutions, and how it makes it more difficult to access police protection and it also increases tensions with community members. It does feed into stereotypes that feed violence from the community.

It is a very long-term work to address the problematic aspects of how we police sex work, and how we treat sex work in this society as a criminal matter, as opposed to a social one or as a work issue or as a human rights issue. That does feed into the violence experienced by sex workers in our province.

I do believe that the national conversation that was sparked in the last year, the conversation that was sparked in Ontario following Premier Wynne's concern about the new laws—I do believe that these are positive steps to start discussing, in the open, who sex workers are in Ontario and how we can facilitate access to protections that Canadians have access to.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And the final comment, from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I was very interested in your comment about the dichotomy between the good victim and the bad victim. Can you talk about what recourse a sex worker has if they are the victim of sexual violence, currently, as a "bad" victim?

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Well, sex workers are bad victims, and we've built that assumption in many different ways. The fact that we do consider them, in many ways, to be unrapeable is definitely problematic in their accessing protection or the criminal justice system for redress.

The fact that police officers and a lot of community members do consider what happens when a sex worker is working as she's asking for it—"Isn't that your job?"—instead of considering that people are consenting to very specific sexual services that are negotiated in advance, and anything that falls outside of that is just like any other issues of absent consent, is definitely a huge barrier.

At this point, be it real or not, it is perceived by sex workers that police are not necessarily a help in those situations, because of experiences or because of assumptions about the police and about the fact that they wouldn't get help.

In the research that just came out from Toronto and Vancouver, with Chinese massage parlours, one of the questions was, "How do you deal with those assaults?" And the response was, "Move on."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We do appreciate your coming and speaking to this committee this morning.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Thank you for having me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you to join the audience now, if you wish to.

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters, from the Carleton University Graduate Students' Association. Please come forward. Make yourselves comfortable. Pour yourselves some water if you like. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

0920

Mr. Theo Hug: Hi. I'm Theo Hug.

Ms. Alannah James: Alannah James.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And begin anytime.

Mr. Theo Hug: Hi, everyone. My name is Theo Hug and I'm currently doing a master's in political economy. I'm the vice-president external to the graduate students' association.

Ms. Alannah James: Hi, everyone. My name is Alannah James. I'm a second-year master's student in political science at Carleton. I am the vice-president academic for the graduate students' association at Carleton University.

Thank you for inviting us here today. Our presentation is only about 11 minutes, so we're leaving a lot of room for questions.

We are excited to speak to this report, because not only does it contain necessary and progressive recommendations, but promoting consent culture and combating rape culture are important parts of campaigns the GSA runs. All of our members are affected by rape culture; as such, we applaud the diverse solutions offered by the action plan.

First, we will detail a bit about the GSA and how this committee fits in with our work. Next, we will take the opportunity to build upon the recommendations of the report by detailing examples specific to Carleton that are also emblematic of the broader power structures contained in the report. Finally, we will provide constructive recommendations from students' point of view. We wish to close by emphasizing how excited we are to be here, and we look forward to working with the province on this.

The GSA works to provide services and advocacy for 3,600 graduate students at Carleton. Our members are students, workers and educators of diverse identities, ages and abilities. The GSA is a member of the Canadian Federation of Students, and as such we support Bilan's earlier suggestions. It is important that our experiences as graduate students in particular contribute to the creation of this legislation. We make the decision to return to post-secondary institutions, despite financial and emotional costs and potential risks to personal safety, because we understand the value and importance of having a comprehensive education.

As a result, the GSA actively fights to keep education accessible through the creation of safer spaces, and this extends to sexualized violence prevention and education.

As a woman, the threat of sexualized violence does not disappear the moment I step on campus. In fact, these threats are more concentrated. Campus is a microcosm for a very problematic broader culture that normalizes gendered, racialized, and sexualized violence against women and other marginalized gender identities.

This culture forces me to moderate my behaviour in certain ways. This includes holding my keys as a weapon, walking with a purpose, not lingering on campus after dark, not wearing revealing clothing, and the list goes on. I can tell you about the multiple occasions I've been street-harassed—and this is just last week. For women, summer is open season on harassment. This has got to stop.

Mr. Theo Hug: Following a highly publicized sexual assault at Carleton in September 2007, students banded together to create a coalition for a sexual assault support centre. They endeavoured to establish a student-run, survivor-centered support center. They asked the administration for space and resources to enable this vital centre to exist. For nearly five years, Carleton's senior administration actively resisted the idea of having a student-run support centre. They refused to provide space for students and distanced themselves from the issue of sexual assault on campus.

Five years later, in 2012, Carleton's administration announced that it would be opening a sexual assault support centre run by the administration. Though we are happy that they created this service and certainly believe that there can never be too many services and resources for people who experience sexual assault, it is important to note that this did not meet the demands of the coalition, as they were specifically asking for a student-run support centre.

This is important because not all students feel comfortable going to a centre run by the administration, particularly when that same administration initially challenged the need for that centre at all. Additionally, we feel that it is important for students to have the choice of services that they are more comfortable with and work best for them. Finally, the service centre established by the administration is located far across campus from where the rest of the service centres are and as a result is not as visible or as well known as the other service centres. That being said, I do know that they do a lot of valuable work and it is certainly a welcome contribution to Carleton's campus. However, it should not have come at the cost of the student-run sexual assault support centre students have long been demanding.

Ms. Alannah James: For this reason, in line with the recommendation put forth by the Canadian Federation of Students, we recommend the government of Ontario establish a \$6-million post-secondary sexual assault support fund. This fund would help to develop and enhance support resources on campus. If this fund could be made available on an application basis, so that post-secondary institutions, students' unions or clubs and societies could apply for it, then initiatives such as the student-run sexual assault support centre could be created in conjunction

with those support resources established by our administrations.

Enabling independent, student-led projects is particularly important because we are the ones experiencing sexualized violence at the highest rates. We have been organizing around these issues for decades and we understand the context in which these experiences take place, putting us in an ideal position to cater to students' needs. Furthermore, we can more easily create support systems that accommodate specific populations that experience sexualized violence at disproportionate rates, including racialized, indigenous, queer, trans and differently abled peoples, alongside all of the intersectional identities that exist among these groups. We are best positioned to establish these resources because we, as students from diverse student bodies, are members of these groups.

One way that the GSA has contributed to this effort is by creating a campaign that recognizes the plurality of ways that trans and gender-nonconforming students experience violence on campus. We created a poster series and we brought with us samples of the five posters we created to show you. This poster series highlights different microaggressions that people experience. These microaggressions are not distinct from rape culture, but are in fact manifestations of it. When trans students get points or stares or are even verbally and physically harassed, this normalizes violence against these populations, making them more vulnerable to sexualized violence.

This poster series reflects the ongoing realities faced by our members. Educating students in a holistic way about consent culture helps maintain safer spaces, thereby ensuring that education remains accessible to students of all identities. As we will detail, this particular point strikes very close to home.

Mr. Theo Hug: As graduate students who value our education immensely, we would like to reinforce the recommendation of mandatory consent training for students at all points in their degree. This past September some Carleton frosh week orientation leaders were photographed in Ottawa wearing t-shirts that read "Fuck Safe Space" on the front and "Or Me" on the back. Not only does this demonstrate a fundamental lack of understanding of rape culture and the need for spaces free from violence and harassment, but this incident and responses to it are also one key example of why comprehensive education is so desperately needed on an ongoing basis for all students.

Frosh is organized by Carleton. In the aftermath, they immediately worked to distance themselves from the incident by abdicating responsibility, as did the students involved and the Carleton community at large. Regardless of the intent, the statement on these shirts serves to attack and demean the ongoing efforts by students, faculty and staff at Carleton to create safe spaces free from violence, oppression and discrimination. Most disturbingly, this incident came only days after a Carleton student was arrested and charged with three counts of sexual assault on campus.

To frame this as an isolated and off-campus incident is to fail to recognize the systemic problems these shirts perpetuate. This is not the first time students have mocked safe space policies. The solution cannot be simply to penalize those students and remove these shirts from campus, but rather to actively combat a campus culture that allows people to think these shirts and other actions that create unsafe spaces are appropriate.

The GSA has been working hard to promote and strengthen inclusive safe spaces on campus. We are present throughout orientation weeks, reaching out to both graduate and undergraduate students with equity campaigns such as Challenge Homophobia and Transphobia, Challenge Racism and challenging other forms of oppression. The GSA also funds two sexual assault outreach coordinators who actively work on the No Means No campaign, addressing gender-based violence and rape culture while also promoting healthy sexuality.

In the aftermath of this incident, the GSA hosted a town hall to address student concerns about the incident. We created committees and events in order to highlight how ineffective the university's response has been. There's a gap in current university policy that does not address a specific campus environment that enables the conditions for sexualized violence, including a party culture fuelled by alcohol, barriers to accessing services and a lack of awareness of what constitutes safe space and consent.

Ms. Alannah James: I'm very happy that the plan mandates that each post-secondary institution adopt a stand-alone policy. I think this will go a long way to make students feel more safe and supported on their campuses. I'm also incredibly happy to see the mandate for student involvement and the requirement that policies be updated every four years. I think these are very necessary aspects of the policy creation process.

However, even the strongest policy is only as good as its implementation. Students rely on university and college administrations to keep them safe, but these same people often refuse, or even cover up incidents of sexualized violence on their campuses in order to protect the reputation of the institution. These same administrations fail to support those who experience this violence. There needs to be a way to hold universities accountable to the policies they create.

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For this reason, our third recommendation would be to establish a post-secondary sexual assault accountability division. This division would provide a number of incredibly necessary pieces of infrastructure, such as tracking sexual assault policies at post-secondary institutions across the province. It would ensure that all universities and colleges collect data about incidents of sexualized violence in a standardized way so that data can be analyzed and the effectiveness of the Premier's plan can be tracked.

Finally, this division would directly oversee and enforce university accountability measures, including receiving and pursuing student complaints when students

feel their universities have not complied with their own policies. If this strategy is to be effective, it needs to support the people who experience sexualized violence in as many ways as possible.

In the Carleton context, this division would prevent the issues that students encountered starting in 2007 around a sexual assault support centre that we mentioned before by enforcing university accountability and transparency.

Currently, Carleton does not have a standalone sexual assault policy. Recently, a number of groups on campus have been meeting to discuss our approaches to challenging rape culture and sexualized violence on campus. We are eagerly waiting for the policy creation process to begin, and we welcome the help of the province in pushing Carleton to develop this policy.

Mr. Theo Hug: Thank you again for having us speak today. As we have detailed, the action plan and its proposed legislation are desperately needed on our campus. As students affected by and actively working to combat sexualized violence, we are natural partners in the fight to establish safer spaces across all locations and for everyone.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here today. I'd like to touch on something that you didn't include in your presentation. One of the big subjects that we're looking at here is the under- or unreporting of sexual violence. As you're from Carleton, I want to know if there are any unique or specific items on campus that either amplify the unreporting or mitigate that unreporting, or things that are specific to campus life that would be beneficial for this committee to understand and to incorporate in our going forward. If you could just expand a little bit on that from a university perspective: unreporting.

Ms. Alannah James: Sure. As Theo mentioned, and Bilan earlier, a lot of these incidents happen in the first few weeks of school. This is not a coincidence. This is when there are many events and parties happening, in residence particularly, but also the broader campus. What we see is a blurring of the lines between consensual sexual interactions and sexual assault and rape. This party culture fuels these incidences by promoting a culture of, "Oh, he was just joking around. This is a friend who lives down the hallway. He couldn't possibly perpetuate problematic realities like this." For students, the lines become blurred, and this is where consent education is absolutely critical because it demarcates these behaviours as acceptable or unacceptable.

Mr. Theo Hug: I would just add to that that the way that the administration—at Carleton, anyways—has sort of distanced itself from these issues really puts up a barrier to students coming forward and reporting, because the administration is essentially saying they don't really care or they care more about their reputation. Obviously, that's important for them because they need funding and whatever. It's not like it doesn't make sense

to us, but it still puts up a barrier for students coming forward, because they don't necessarily feel like they're going to be believed or they're going to be supported in the ways that they want to be.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for coming today and thank you for your efforts to create safe places on campus for gender-nonconforming, LGBT and other sexual minority groups.

We tend to think of this issue as being primarily an issue for undergraduates in their first few weeks of school. You started out your presentation by talking about graduate students and the need for your voice to be included. Can you expand upon that a little more, about the differences from an undergraduate perspective versus a graduate student perspective?

Ms. Alannah James: Absolutely. Graduate students pursue independent research more than undergraduate students. As such, we are on campus for longer hours, sometimes overnight. Students in the sciences are tracking laboratory processes that go for hours and hours. As such, they're more vulnerable in campus spaces where patrols aren't as regular, there's not as many people around, and they're in isolated spaces. That would be the primary difference for graduate students in their research. But, also in a social sense, they are more isolated, because there aren't the frosh week activities dedicated to them, they're not in groups in residence—although there is a graduate residence. They're more socially isolated, and, as such, it can be harder to reach out, which is where the GSA steps in. We form committees and we actively encourage gender non-conforming students on campus to interact with our committees. But we can't reach everyone.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much for being here this morning and thank you very much for your support of safe places.

I do want to ask you a question: What do you think is the major contributor to sexual violence on campus? We had an interesting presentation earlier this morning at the secondary level and their approach to that; I don't know if you were here earlier when they were here. What do you think the major contributors are—you've said a few things—and how would you change those?

Mr. Theo Hug: I think campus is just like a little concentrated rest of the society. Rape culture is everywhere, right? So I don't know if there's one key thing that contributes to sexualized violence on campus more so than anywhere else.

Mr. John Fraser: You just had mentioned alcohol and parties. So I'm wondering, when you're tackling a big problem, sometimes it's, "Okay, well, let's take on this." That's the reason for my question, but I appreciate that it's a big, complex problem.

Mr. Theo Hug: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm going to bring in Minister Naqvi, who has joined us, for a quick comment.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you for your presentation and for raising some very important points.

The one point that struck me is the conversation around creating safe spaces, which is a very important discussion, and what we need to do to have safe spaces on campus. My colleague MPP McMahon and I were talking, because it seems like, when we were in university—the issues have not changed. There's one thing that I felt when I was on campus, and I feel the same way now, that the entire campus should be a safe space; don't you agree? We don't need to have specific rooms which are safe spaces. What we need to get to is—we want our whole society to be a safe space, but when we walk on a campus, this is an institution of higher learning and development; the whole place should be a safe space where everybody's respected regardless of who they are. Would you agree to that, and any thoughts on how we get there?

Ms. Alannah James: I have an answer for Mr. Fraser. I've been thinking it through and I can address both questions at once.

Post-secondary institutions are touted as a place of higher learning, and I think that often obscures the reality. Although these are independent people pursuing their educations, this almost silences discussions and discourses that we should be having about consent and safer spaces and gender non-conforming folks on campus and many associated topics. So I think that students in their first few weeks are encouraged to be independent students and people on campus, and this obscures the fact they're part of a broader community. It's very exciting to be accepted to university, and it's almost like society then lets go of the responsibility of educating students because we have many amazing high school programs—that we've heard from today—but those end when you graduate high school, and the responsibility is not taken up by anyone else. This falls to the university, which is why we're holding the university accountable.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and appearing before this committee today. I invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

KOALA PLACE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We go to our next presenters. I ask the presenters with Koala Place to come forward.

Good morning. Please make yourselves comfortable. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to give your presentation and that will be followed by some questions from our committee. Please start by stating your names.

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Ms. Franca DiDiomete: Franca DiDiomete.

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Elyse Lauzon-Alguire.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: I just have a PowerPoint that I'm going to—

Ms. Franca DiDiomete: Perhaps, while she's doing that, I can just do my presentation, and then we'll get through it quickly.

I'm here representing the agencies working on developing a child and youth advocacy centre in Ottawa, and we thought we'd do a joint presentation. You're going to hear about CYACs from my colleague from the Koala centre, and I know that you heard from the Ontario network of child and youth advocacy centres earlier on. So I'm going to keep my comments more general rather than specific to CYACs.

In 2008, StatsCan reported that the rate of sexual assault against children and youth reported to police in 2006 was five times higher than it was for adults. We know that trauma may have enduring effects on both the neurobiological and psychological development of children. Severe and repeated trauma during youth may have enduring effects, altering stress responsivity and altering adult behaviour patterns. Individuals experience a greatly increased risk of mood anxiety and personality disorders through adult life.

Professor Bessel van der Kolk, who has done a lot of research on trauma and a lot of work on trauma, conducted a five-year study of 528 trauma patients from American hospitals. This study identified a range of symptoms that correlated well with prolonged, severe childhood sexual abuse: "... the inability to regulate emotions like rage and terror, along with intense suicidal feelings, somatic disorder, negative self-perception, poor relationships, chronic feelings of isolation, despair and hopelessness; and dissociation and amnesia.

"The implications are that real-world childhood ... trauma may be responsible for many psychopathologies usually considered to have endogenous origins, including various kinds of phobic, depressive, anxiety and eating disorders, not to mention borderline personality, antisocial personality and multiple personality disorder."

The long-term impact of child sexual abuse is far-reaching. Many studies indicate that without the right support, the effects of childhood abuse can last a lifetime.

I see the impact of child sexual abuse every day at our agency; it's not just statistics to me. Adults, both men and women, come specifically for our sexual abuse programs, or they seek counselling for other issues, which can then be tracked back to childhood sexual abuse. We also see many victims of sexual abuse in our partner assault response program. So they then become abusive to other people.

My point: We, as a society, cannot afford to do nothing in response to childhood sexual abuse. The cost is too high. If we don't provide children with the right support, many of these children will be at greater risk throughout their lives, not just as children.

If the human cost is not a sufficient reason to act, then perhaps we need to consider the economic cost. A 2003 study done by Health Canada put the cost of child sexual abuse at \$3.6 billion. If we intervene early, we can reduce both the human and economic costs. Thank you.

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Good morning. My name is Elyse. I'm the executive director of Koala Place child

and youth advocacy centre. We are based out of Cornwall, Ontario. I'm aware that you have heard from various of our colleagues this past couple of weeks.

I'd like to begin by providing you with just a brief overview of what Koala Place is. Basically, we provide a safe, neutral, confidential environment for children, youth and families who are victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse and maltreatment. They come to our centre for the forensic interview: They meet with police services, child protection services and victim services. Basically, it is a hub for children and youth who are victims. Our centre is 24/7. We deal with three police services, two child protection services and many other community agencies.

We became operational in January 2014, and we are the fourth centre to open in Ontario. We belong to the Ontario CYAC network, which is comprised of many centres across Ontario, some that are open, some that are in development.

Just to share a few statistics with you—there are several more statistics in the handout that I provided you—60% of all reported sexual assaults are against children. One in three girls and one in six boys experience an unwanted sexual act. Four out of five incidents of sexual abuse will occur before the age of 18, and 95% of child sexual abuse victims know their perpetrator.

Since opening Koala Place, we've had 162 investigations come through our centre. I can say, based on our statistics, that indeed it is mostly family members who are the perpetrators.

You may have heard of the recent Jeffrey Baldwin inquest. Jeffrey was a healthy baby when he was placed in the care of his grandparents, and he died—he was starved to death—in 2002, which led to an inquest. One of the recommendations submitted—which I've copied below—is that “The Ministry of Children and Youth Services and Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, in consultation with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and provincial police authorities, shall expand the child and youth advocacy centre model across Ontario and provide the funding necessary to sustain this province-wide expansion.”

Again, this is simply a scenario that reinforces that we need to provide a better response to child abuse victims.

Why is a child and youth advocacy centre needed? As we know, early assistance is crucial to the long-term impact for children. Child and youth advocacy centres are a seamless, coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing the needs of child and youth victims and witnesses of abuse and crime. CYACs seek to minimize trauma, including system-induced trauma, by providing a child-friendly, one-stop hub for child abuse victims and witnesses. A collaborative, multidisciplinary intervention, such as the one implemented by Koala Place, is part of the solution in responding to crimes against children. CYACs are now recognized as a leading practice to ensure better access to the justice system for children and youth. There are over 700 CYACs in the United States, and that's where the model stemmed from for the

Canadian. A lot of evidence-based research comes out of the United States.

A CYAC coordinates and assists in integrating the services of a highly skilled multidisciplinary team of professionals to respond to cases involving child and youth victims of abuse. Fundamental members of a multidisciplinary team include police, child protection, the crown attorney, medical, mental health, victim support and advocacy services, and many more.

In our centre, we have amazing partnerships with our police services victim/witness program. It has been astonishing. I don't believe I mentioned this, but our centre is an outcome of the Cornwall public inquiry that we had in 2005. This was one of the recommendations submitted to the commissioner. It has been in the works for many years. We are certainly pleased to be open, and certainly, there is a need for our centre.

I won't spend too much time on this, but some of the benefits delivered by a CYAC:

- Better outcomes for children: Again, this is early intervention and reduced trauma for the children.

- Improved client experience: It provides a single point of access, so the child does not have to go to the police station and then to child protection services and then to the crown's office. It provides a one-stop.

- Enhanced partnerships in the community: It brings all the key players involved in a child abuse investigation.

- Optimization of government and community resources: It streamlines and reduces duplication of service.

- Public confidence and public safety: It helps the child not to fall through the cracks. We deal a lot with victim services, and they provide that constant support throughout the investigation.

- Collecting and using evidence, so increased conviction rates: Our hope is that we obtain a better disclosure from the child.

The CYAC supports the It's Never Okay action plan, and I'll touch on this. How do we fit into this action plan? CYACs provide a hub for children and youth and families who are victims and witnesses of abuse. This reflects one of the action plan commitments to introduce an innovative fund to test new service delivery approaches based on best practices; for example, community hub models.

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CYACs improve the experience of children, youth and families navigating the criminal justice system. Again, this reflects the commitment to increase supports and develop an enhanced prosecution model to improve the experience of survivors navigating the criminal justice system.

We provide training and ongoing professional development for MDT members. This supports the commitment to develop up-to-date training for front-line workers in the health, community services, education and justice sectors to better support survivors of sexual abuse and harassment.

We provide public education that is prevention-focused, which supports a commitment to launch a multimedia public education and awareness campaign to engage Ontarians in a discussion about how to prevent sexual violence and harassment.

We feel strongly that the province of Ontario needs to strengthen its response to child abuse victims by including the implementation and sustainability of CYACs in Ontario. We are recommending making us part of the solution in the action plan.

Just to touch personally on the recommendations brought forward from my board of directors: We are interested in complementary objectives, such as prevention and research activities. My board of directors is recommending the wide adoption of the RespectED violence and abuse program, which is delivered by the Canadian Red Cross. They have a variety of programs regarding sexual violence and harassment.

Another recommendation is improved teacher training to build teacher awareness of maltreatment, how to recognize it and how to respond.

Train professionals who work with children and youth in order to equip them with effective steps and strategies to prevent child sexual abuse, and train the general community regarding abuse, reporting and bystander intervention. Teach people to overcome their resistance to helping out.

Implement effective child protection and child sexual abuse prevention policies, ensuring background checks are indeed conducted in all businesses and organizations.

Provide sexual abuse prevention and response training for staff volunteers who work with children and youth.

In order to successfully achieve the recommendations listed, funding for a prevention educator or coordinator would be of fundamental importance. I've just added a quote here from Nelson Mandela: "We owe our children—the most vulnerable citizens in any society—a life free from violence and fear. In order to ensure this, we must be tireless in our efforts ... to obtain peace, justice and prosperity ... for communities and members of the same family. We must address the roots of violence."

Every child and youth deserves to be raised in a family, community and province where he or she is safe from abuse. The truth is that abuse happens. Whether they're our own children, our neighbour's, the children we work with or a stranger, we all have the responsibility for their well-being. We owe it to them to do whatever we can to keep their childhood a safe place to be. Child and youth advocacy centres are doing something about this, but we need your support.

Thank you for your time and for listening to our recommendations.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Committee members, I want to encourage you to put your hands up if you're going to be the one speaking.

MPP Sattler asks our first question.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for coming to this committee. We've certainly heard a lot since we've been doing this, seeking input about the incidence

of adult survivors of sexual abuse or sexual violence having experienced it as children.

We also heard about the impact on the broader family context when it is a family member who is the perpetrator of the violence and the need for different kinds of support to help the family heal because of the divisions and tensions that this can create within a family coming to terms with this reality. Can you talk a little bit about the kinds of supports? Does the CYAC provide the broader family counselling, as well as support to the individual child victim?

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Yes.

Ms. Franca DiDionete: Sure. One of the things to remember is that CYACs are not standardized across the province or even across the country. They all look different in response to the needs in their community because there may be already existing services. The idea of a CYAC is to bring all of those services together in one place, to work together to provide a more seamless experience with families.

Most CYACs in Ontario do not have a counselling component. Counselling isn't funded, unfortunately, by the province of Ontario in a generic way. It has to be very specific. Of the ones that I've visited, they've been able to cobble together pieces of counselling, including family counselling, from other existing services but there is no specific stream of funding for counselling, which I think is unfortunate because it doesn't allow CYACs to do the kind of work that they could do in terms of prevention.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from Minister Naqvi.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Elyse and Franca. Franca, I was hoping I could get some of your thoughts on the services for male victims of sexual violence. The reason I ask is I know that in eastern Ontario you and your agency provide those services. Just from your experience, your agency has been doing this now for two years—

Ms. Franca DiDionete: Four.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Four years; time is flying—four years for male victims of sexual violence. A two-prong question: One is, as you're providing those services, have you found some challenges being unique to male victims and what are those unique features, in terms of things that we need to consider as we're discussing, of course, sexual violence and harassment as it relates to males?

Ms. Franca DiDionete: Certainly we've noticed some differences between the male survivors and female survivors. One of the notable differences is that men tend to come into service and exit. They may come for two sessions, leave, and then come back six months, a year later when they're in a better place. Most services aren't equipped to handle that. If we're doing groups, they're 12 weeks. We're the lead for eastern Ontario so we also work with all of our partners. Many of our partners are doing a lot more individual than group work now, recognizing that in-and-out process that men live differently than women. Women tend to stick with it a little bit more.

The other difference, I think, would be that we see a lot of rage. You see anger with women but you don't see the level of rage that we see with the men. Many of them have been incarcerated and many come through the Partner Assault Response Program. They're charged with assault. One of the questions we ask is, "Have you ever been sexually assaulted or abused as a child?" Then we refer them to the program.

I'd say those are the two notable differences.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. A final comment from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here and making your presentation.

One of the things that we've heard often is the need for integration and coordination, and we see that what you're doing is that integration and coordination. I've heard that for many areas, from many people, that the ability to integrate and coordinate services for adults has been hindered and hampered because of funding from different sources, different ministries. You alluded a little bit to this, that therapy was not funded. We were in Kingston yesterday, and they've been trying since 2008 to get an integrated approach for sexual assault and violence.

I'm just wondering if you could share with the committee your thoughts and views on how you overcame these different funding challenges and what is still out there that we need to improve upon or how to overcome the different ministries wanting to keep different things on their own turf.

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Well, that's difficult. CYACs again are geared towards children and youth. We are funded by the Department of Justice Canada through the Victims Fund, and they provided basic start-up operational costs. This is an area that we unfortunately are headed for, to some degree, a crisis to keep our centre open. That's why we're seeking the support from the provincial government as well to support—

Mr. Randy Hillier: So most of your funding is from justice?

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: That's correct. Again, it was only for start-up costs. We're still waiting to hear—our funding ended on March 31 of this year.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We appreciate your appearing before this committee this morning, and we invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

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SISTERS ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters. Committee members, Isabel Rodrigue is not here, so we're moving ahead with Sisters Achieving Excellence. If you could please come forward, have a seat and make yourself comfortable. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you.

Please begin by stating your name for the record, and start any time.

Ms. Bailey Reid: Okay, thank you. Hopefully, I'm just going to get my presentation up here.

My name is Bailey Reid, and I am the founder and chief executive officer of Sisters Achieving Excellence. I can tell you a little bit about me, to start. I started Sisters Achieving Excellence when I was 25 years old, when I noticed, as a young woman, there were a lot of things I was being told that I needed by the media. I needed to have long hair, and I needed 200 pairs of skinny jeans and a hot boyfriend and to know my perfect shade of red lipstick.

At that point, we had 600 missing or murdered indigenous women in Canada. Now we know the number is more like double that. But I noticed that indigenous women were vastly overrepresented in the criminal justice system, but really underrepresented as government leaders. Some 90% or more of women who are incarcerated in Canada have experienced abuse or exploitation at some point in their lives.

So I thought maybe we don't need red lipstick and skinny jeans. Maybe what we need are programs that move us forward as a community, programs that move us forward as women, programs that educate us and empower us. That was my goal with Sisters Achieving Excellence.

Since then, we've worked with 250 women in Ottawa. We were recognized as a best practice by the Grand Valley Institution and by Vanier Centre for Women in Milton, and have served women in their institutions for the last year. As of next week, we'll be serving women in North Bay Jail as well. That's what we do with Sisters Achieving Excellence.

I really wanted to highlight today who we serve, because when we talk about sexual violence, they tend to be left out of the conversation. Certainly, I mentioned indigenous women and the rates of incarceration, and I think it's also really important to highlight the heightened rates of abuse that they experience as well.

I think we talk a lot about rape as a tactic of war in countries all over the world. We fail to see rape as a tactic of war against indigenous women in Canada. We know that rape is used to dehumanize and to colonize people, and when we look at what's happening to women in Canada, particularly women who are disappearing, that's happening. I think that women who are struggling through mental health concerns, when they have experienced addictions and they're working through that, are really left out of the conversation around sexual violence.

It's because we are biased. We're all humans; we're not robots. We've had experiences; we've internalized media messages our whole lives. We've had our experiences that shape us and, for the most part, make us really empathetic, kind, understanding human beings. But bias happens, and that's okay. It's not about blame; it's about recognizing internal biases.

When we look at policing in particular, women who are marginalized and criminalized have all sorts of experience with the police. A very small portion of it is about reporting sexual violence experiences. When police

are working with marginalized women, we've been trying to tell them, "You have to get past the fact that they may have a criminal record themselves." They may have called the police hundreds of times for these experiences. If you're a sex worker, the chances of you being sexually assaulted are much greater. It may happen to you more than once. It's about asking our justice system to recognize this and to still honour them as survivors of sexual violence.

Our biases have created what I like to call the "perfect victim" paradigm. We see this in reporting of sexual violence in the media, and we see it in the way that we respond to sexual violence. Our biases have kind of created a framework that we work from, whether a woman is a "true" survivor of sexual violence. In this paradigm, we think, "Okay. Well, is she white? Yes or no? Was she sober? Yes or no? What was she wearing? Has she had sex with him before? Does she sell sex?"—these paradigms. The perpetrator's bright future: That one is one of my favourite things that we see in the media when we're reporting sexual violence.

We must recognize that all sexual violence is worthy of the justice system, is worthy of support. When we think about the perfect victim paradigm, this framework can be really dangerous when we're not aware of it and when we're not keeping our own biases in check.

Perpetrators are also aware of the sexual violence paradigm, obviously, and it's particularly dangerous because they know how to exploit it. A good example is, there's a case before the courts in Canada right now with a media personality. Allegedly, he had taken feminist studies so he knew about what the barriers of sexual violence reporting were for women and, you know, he exploited them. The stories are saying that he had started the assault consensually and then it moved to non-consensual. He would know that this would blur the lines for women and confuse them as to whether or not—he knew that he was in a position of power in Canadian media and that coming forward about his violence would really take a lot of courage and a lot of bravery. And we're talking about women there who aren't marginalized.

So if you're a sex worker—you have to recognize that perpetrators know that they're using drugs. The police have experience with them before. They're not necessarily going to be believed as easily as a woman from Rockcliffe who is assaulted in the bushes. It's not going to be the same.

When we're aware of the perfect victim paradigm and aware of our biases, it helps us to serve women and it helps us to recognize all women as survivors of sexual violence.

I think it's really important to note too that with women who are marginalized and young, they are at such higher risk of exploitation because they have to survive, right? You have to eat. You have to have somewhere to live.

The girls that I serve think that they've got a great new boyfriend, and unfortunately, it's about trafficking. So

traffickers are making \$280,000 per year on just one victim. Most of the girls I know—he's got a girl in the west end, a girl in the east end and a girl in the south end. That's just selling women, not drugs. It's a very profitable industry to traffic young women.

There is a cultural environment that excuses violence against women. So when we look at—I mean, this is a fashion advertisement and it's so rapey, for lack of a better term.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's horrible.

Ms. Bailey Reid: It is. It's horrible. This is what's happening. We live in a country where you can buy a costume called "Pocahottie" and dress up as a sexy indigenous woman. This is really problematic, and the excusing of violence against, particularly, indigenous women is just one way we dehumanize them and colonize them, and they face structural inequality in Canada. But we have to recognize that we do have a culture that excuses and condones violence against women. And this is just a fashion advertisement. There are hundreds of examples.

Dr. Christine Stark did a really interesting study that was finding that a lot of indigenous women were being trafficked from Thunder Bay into Minnesota. When she interviewed these women and asked them about their experiences, one of the women said, "There are no pimps anymore, just boyfriends." In Ottawa and across the country, I think this is another really important thing to notice: Yes, there are pimps who use violence and drugs to control and manipulate their victims, but for the most part it's about saying, "Oh, you're so wonderful. You're my girl. I know that you're having fun at this party. My friend John thinks you're really hot. Can you just spend a little bit of time with him in the room? He's going to give me 50 bucks. We just have to do this till we can save up enough for our first and last month's rent together." That's how it starts.

We do literacy support. That's what Sisters Achieving Excellence does, and when her phone is blowing up because the guy keeps texting her because he doesn't know where she is, she thinks this is sweet and kind. She's like, "Oh, isn't he so wonderful? He doesn't know where I am right now, so he's sending me 60 text messages"—whoa. Let's take a step back and think about what a healthy relationship really looks like.

1010

This is how it starts: What ends up happening is that the police start seeing the women that I serve as uncooperative victims, because she's much more afraid of her pimp/boyfriend than she is of the legal system. She loves him. We know that abusers aren't violent and horrible all the time. She does think that he loves her. She doesn't want him to get in trouble; she just wants the violence to stop. She knows the game, right? It's all about playing the game. You don't snitch and you don't rat. These are really important things. When we're looking at addressing sexual violence with marginalized women, we have to stop thinking of them as uncooperative victims. We have to understand the context in which they live and in which they have to survive.

Again, you guys will probably hear this all day, but we know that there's just so much shame around reporting sexual violence, and there's so much shame around coming forward as a sexual violence survivor, especially if you are a woman who has been marginalized or criminalized in any other way. I think that that's one of the most important things: that when we're thinking about how we want to start addressing sexual violence in Ontario, we have to really address the culture of blaming and shaming victims of sexual violence.

All right. Questions?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Questions. Here we go. We're going to start with our Liberal caucus: MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you so much for your presentation. I think it's great that, at 25, you were so motivated to start a program to support women.

You wanted to talk more about support programs and education around empowering women. What do you think we as a government can do to empower women?

Ms. Bailey Reid: I think what we've found has worked really well with our project in jails, the Transcendence Project, is encouraging women. They have so many labels on them already. They see themselves as, "I am a failed mother, because my kids got taken by CAS. I'm just a drug addict. I'm just a sex worker." Our Transcendence Project is about transcending those boundaries and letting them know that they can overcome them. So as a province, really encourage those programs, programs that help women to move beyond those boundaries and give concrete skills.

The thing with literacy is, a lot of the women I work with don't really want to do sex work. Unfortunately, their choices are limited because they don't have the literacy skills to fill out a job application. I think we have a really dangerous perception that drug dealing and sex work are easy money, and it's not. It's not easy to have sex with somebody you don't want to have sex with. When we do give them the skills to do something else, often that is what they'll choose to do, even if it means making less money.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. Amazing work. Last Thursday, I just did a motion in the Legislature about human trafficking and the coordinated approach that we need to take. You could have given my speech. You just did it amazingly on that slide deck. Hopefully we can maybe get your presentation?

Ms. Bailey Reid: Yes, for sure.

Ms. Laurie Scott: If you can send it in to Will, then we can get it.

So you started this up. How are you telling people about it, especially on the human trafficking part? They're so young; sometimes they're starting to be recruited from public schools, let alone high schools. How do they know how to get to you?

Ms. Bailey Reid: We run three programs in Ottawa that are in transitional houses. One of our programs is at

Tewegan Transition House. We have a program at the Vesta women's recovery centre, which does addictions treatments, and then a supportive housing home through the John Howard Society.

Right now, you'd have to be a resident of one of those homes to access our programs. It would be great if we had the funding to expand to a community program where women could just do it drop-in style, but our volunteers do amazing work. I'm the only staff. It's all volunteer. It's so sustainable, and I'm grateful for them every day.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Well, you are a remarkable individual. Thank you very much.

Ms. Bailey Reid: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for coming to make the presentation. One of the phrases that you used we haven't heard before, and that's about this concept of the perpetrator's bright future. I'm reminded: There was a recent case in London, in my community, where that was exactly how the media reported it. He was a hockey player, an A student, and so there was this feeling of being sympathetic to the perpetrator because of his bright future. How do we address this? What kinds of recommendations would you put forward to address that?

Ms. Bailey Reid: I think the first thing we have to do is address the fact that our default position is to disbelieve a victim and disbelieve that this is happening to women. I think we hear that so often. We make up excuses all the time: "Maybe she just wanted to have sex with him because he was a hockey player and the next day she regretted it," or "He broke up with her, so now she's a vindictive girlfriend." These are myths that we have to start addressing in the media, and we have to start addressing them in our own cultures, society and community. I think that's a huge thing.

From a legislative standpoint, I think that when we think about the perpetrators of sexual violence, we have to make sure that we are really enforcing the fact that they did something wrong. Women don't do anything wrong by coming forward. They don't do anything wrong. They don't ever ask for it. Nothing they ever do could possibly ask for the sexual violence that happens to them, so we have got to put the onus on the perpetrator and confront his behaviour.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. It was a wonderful presentation.

Ms. Bailey Reid: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you to join our audience now, should you wish to.

M^{ME} ISABEL RODRIGUE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter. Committee members, we're going to leap back to the previous presenter, Isabel Rodrigue. I would ask you to come forward.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Thank you, everybody.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Bonjour.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Bonjour.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Vous avez 15 minutes.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Ça ne sera pas si long.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Bien.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Et je suis en retard parce que j'arrive de Hawkesbury, et c'est loin.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Oui, c'est loin.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: C'est loin, et il y a de la construction.

Je suis ici ce matin pour vous parler d'une catégorie de femmes de notre société qui est, selon moi, laissée-pour-compte. Premièrement, je vais vous dire que mon nom est Isabel Rodrigue. Je suis une enseignante dans une école secondaire de l'est ontarien. Je travaille avec des jeunes de la septième à la 12^e année.

Ça fait quatre ans que je suis à Hawkesbury. Avant ça, j'étais à Ottawa. L'est ontarien est une population tout à fait différente de celle d'Ottawa. Je vais expliquer pourquoi je vous dis ça. Il arrive souvent, dans ces petites villes-là et dans ces petits villages-là, des couples qui se défont; les parents ont des nouveaux conjoints et ça se met à mal aller avec l'adolescente.

La problématique que je veux surtout soulever c'est qu'une enfant qui a 16 ou 17 ans et qui va faire une demande à l'aide à l'enfance, si c'est sa première demande, elle ne sera pas considérée; l'aide à l'enfance la considère comme une adulte. Le problème est que cette enfant-là, qui ne peut plus vivre chez elle pour telle ou telle raison, a 16 ou 17 ans et ne peut pas aller demander de l'aide sociale sans avoir un fiduciaire et ne peut pas prendre un appartement et signer un bail si elle n'a pas de fiduciaire.

La raison pour laquelle je voulais présenter devant ce comité-là, qui est contre l'abus sexuel, c'est parce que je trouve que ces petites filles-là, à ce moment-là, deviennent des proies. Si elles ont 16 ou 17 ans, elles peuvent être la proie d'un homme ou d'un jeune homme de 22 ou 23 ans qui va dire : « Viens rester avec moi. Je vais l'encaisser, ton chèque d'Ontario au travail. » Parce qu'Ontario au travail accepte d'aider financièrement ces jeunes filles-là, mais fait le chèque au nom d'un fiduciaire.

Pourquoi je le sais? Parce que depuis que je suis à Hawkesbury, j'ai eu Catherine qui a vécu chez moi, parce que je suis une prof célibataire. J'ai une grande maison. J'ai une chambre dans le sous-sol. J'ai une première petite fille qui a vécu chez moi; elle est partie. J'ai maintenant Jardlyne, qui vit chez moi depuis décembre.

Donc je me dis que si ce n'est pas une prof qui le fait, si ce n'est pas une adulte qui le fait—??Jardeline, avant de vivre chez moi, a été dans la Maison Interlude, qui est la maison pour les femmes battues, une maison de crise qui est à Hawkesbury. Elle a vécu là pendant un mois avant que je la prenne chez moi. Donc, si ce n'est pas de ça, elles font quoi, ces enfants-là? Ce qui me meut, moi, au niveau des lois, c'est que ces enfants-là sont laissées-pour-compte.

1020

J'ai une idée de faire une maison éventuellement. Je voudrais faire une maison qui est un endroit où ces enfants peuvent soit vivre là jusqu'à ce qu'elles aient fini leur 12^e année, soit jusqu'à ce qu'elles aient 18 ans, soit jusqu'à ce qu'elles ne veulent plus rester là. Donc, on ne veut pas retenir les enfants de force, mais c'est d'offrir un environnement où la petite fille peut vivre, elle peut—au niveau de la subvention, ça, c'est une autre histoire. C'est encore quelque chose que je ne sais pas.

J'essaie de trouver—je me dis, « Bon, si Ontario au travail subventionne ces enfants-là, peut-être qu'un organisme comme Ontario au travail peut aider »—peut-être que ce n'est pas eux autres qui peuvent aider. Peut-être que la location familiale qui est donnée à une enfant habituellement peut rentrer dans une subvention comme ça. Ça, je ne le sais pas.

J'ai calculé les niveaux statistiques à Hawkesbury : les petites filles de 16 ou 17 ans, c'est 1 % de la population. Je ne suis pas en train de dire qu'il y a 1 % de la population qui a de la misère, parce qu'il y a des petites filles de 16 ou 17 ans qui ont de bons parents, et puis que ça va bien. Mais, moi, depuis quatre ans, j'ai accueilli Catherine, j'ai accueilli Jardlyne, mais j'aurais pu prendre Vicky et j'aurais pu prendre Stéphanie et j'aurais pu prendre Marilyn.

Je travaille dans une école secondaire de 400 élèves. À Hawkesbury, il y a aussi une école qui est beaucoup plus grosse qui a environ 1 000 élèves. Puis ça, c'est juste Hawkesbury. Je ne peux pas croire que, dans d'autres endroits en Ontario, ça n'arrive pas de la même façon. Je trouve ça déplorable. C'est ça. Je ne comprends pas comment on peut laisser faire ça, mais ces petites filles ont besoin d'aide.

Ma présentation était simplement ça. Je n'ai pas de « slide show ». C'est tout ce que je voulais vous dire.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup. May I speak to you in English, because je pense que mon français n'est—

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: And I could be able to answer in English, but I was not able to present in English. I'm sorry.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Well, we'll make ourselves understood to each other.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Yes, yes.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): La première demande est de MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. You hit on an excellent point, and I believe—I'm just trying to search our legislation. Basically, if the 16-year-old, say, hadn't been in CAS before—

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: CAS being l'aide à l'enfance?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Children's aid.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —the children's aid society; thank you, Marie-France, for helping me—they then can't enter it between 16 years and 18 years old.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: They're considered as adults.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Right. So we have been trying to bring forward pieces of legislation to change that very

thing, because that is absolutely wrong and you are absolutely right.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Okay.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We will keep in touch with you. I was trying to email quickly to verify: I believe it was just a private member's bill in that respect, but we definitely, I know, on the PC side, agree that it has to be extended to 18. You're right, and we'll try and make that change in legislation. Thank you.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Because even, you know, the Ontario au travail, which is—

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Ontario Works.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Ontario Works, yes.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Because they give a cheque to the kid and then they say, "We'll call you every month to see if you're doing fine," but they don't.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I agree.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: They don't. The little girl is okay because she's living with me and I'm a teacher—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Because you rescued her.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: —but if he was a predator, if he was a guy who is just keeping the girl for the cheque, they wouldn't call her and say, "Are you okay? Are you all right? Are you eating?"

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's totally wrong, and thank you for interjecting as best you can to save as many as you can from any possible perpetrators.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: But, you know, there's only so much I can do.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, exactly, so thank you. We are working on changing that. Thank you.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, and apologies for speaking English.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: It's okay.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I did listen to the translation of your presentation. One of the things you said at the very beginning was about the differences between the youth you have dealt with in Hawkesbury and also in Ottawa. I wondered if you could expand a little bit more on that. What makes the challenges different in a small community like Hawkesbury versus Ottawa?

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: In my opinion—when I was in Ottawa, I was working in the école secondaire publique Deslauriers; that is in the southwest. There's a majority of immigrants there—a lot of people from Djibouti, Somalia and Lebanon—and they just don't talk about those things. They're not going to say, "I have a problem at home." It's taboo. In Hawkesbury, kids can be really in your face with their problems. They open up and say, "You know, Madame, my mom just kicked me out of the house this morning." It's just like right in your face, and you have to deal with it. I think that the kids I was working with when I was in Ottawa, they wouldn't talk about those things because you cannot say, "I'm being beat up"—you just don't say it.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Cultural differences.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I think that's the big difference. Again, there are schools in Ottawa that are more—I don't know how to say that in English—qui sont originaires du Canada. Leurs parents sont originaires du Canada. Donc, ce que j'ai expérimenté, c'est une école à 75 % immigrante, quand j'étais à Ottawa.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Marie-France, could you translate for us?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Newcomers, so 75% of her—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, I got that.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): Thank you. And our final questions for you are from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I think John's going to—on va partager.

M. John Fraser: Je vous remercie d'être ici aujourd'hui et pour votre présentation. The rest of—mon français n'est pas bon.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: That's okay.

Mr. John Fraser: I want to thank you first for what you're doing, which is, you see a problem—and we've seen that a few times in almost every presentation this morning, where people see a need and they move in to meet that need at their own personal expense and their own effort. But if there was one thing that we could do as a government to fix the things that you have described this morning, what would that be?

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I was not expecting that question.

Mr. John Fraser: Sorry.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: No. What I really want—because someone said, "Go to that committee and say what you have to say," but to be honest with you, I don't even know what this committee does and I don't know what is going to happen with that. But what I want is to be able to have a house that will—accueillir?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Welcome.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: —that will welcome those girls who are in need. There is the same problem with boys—don't get me wrong, it's not only the girls—but the committee is about sexual harassment and sexual abuse, and my fear is that those girls can be—prey?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Yes, yes.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: So what I really want is—changing the law would be good, but again—

Mr. John Fraser: You've answered the question very well. So don't—

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I did?

Mr. John Fraser: Yes, you have, very well.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I'm a teacher. I talk a lot. That's the thing—

Mr. John Fraser: We're politicians. We talk a lot, too.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Voilà.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Je voulais juste te remercier beaucoup d'être ici au nom du comité.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Je pense que tu as apporté, comme MPP Scott mentionnait, un point très

important par rapport à la vulnérabilité de nos jeunes à cet âge-là et l'impact qu'ils ont, peut-être pas seulement à Hawkesbury, je vais être honnête, peut-être à travers notre belle province, à savoir les expériences de vie à la maison et puis comment ça peut se transiger dans la situation qu'ils vont vivre après.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Oui, parce que je ne suis pas allée tant dans les statistiques—

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Non, c'est bien.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: —mais si on regarde aussi dans l'est ontarien, les filles-mères, parce qu'elles ont 16 ans, n'ont pas de place où aller puis elles tombent enceintes, et ça—

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: C'est affreux.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Bien, ça « scrape » un peu la vie d'une femme.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Merci d'avoir présenté. On apprécie beaucoup.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci à vous.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup. And I would like to give you some information; you asked about the purpose of this committee.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have been asked by the Ontario Legislature to hear as many stories and experiences as possible for people who are dealing with sexual violence and harassment. So whether it's survivors or advocates or anyone with a stake in this, we want to hear your recommendations on how to shift social norms and look at the barriers that are preventing people from coming forward and reporting. We're going to take all that information and those recommendations back to the Ontario Legislature and hopefully create some kind of a social shift in our culture.

I hope that answers your question.

1030

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Yes.

La Présidente (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup d'être ici aujourd'hui.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci, madame.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh, and we have one more comment.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to say that Jim McDonnell, the member from Glengarry-Prescott-Russell, introduced that piece of legislation. I'll get your email and send it to you, and hopefully that addresses some of what you've brought forward today.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci beaucoup.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We invite you to join the audience now, if you wish to, for our next presenter.

ACTION ONTARIENNE CONTRE LA VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMMES

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call up Maira Martin. Please come forward. Make yourself

comfortable. Am I saying your name correctly? Je dis votre nom—

M^{me} Maira Martin: C'est Maira.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Maira?

M^{me} Maira Martin: C'est parfait.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Vous avez 15 minutes pour parler to the committee. Après, nous demandons les questions. Commencez.

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci. Je vais m'exprimer en français, donc j'espère que ça ira pour la traduction.

Premièrement, au nom d'Action ontarienne, j'aimerais vous remercier de nous avoir donné l'opportunité de venir ici pour parler et pour faire des recommandations sur comment lutter efficacement contre les violences à caractère sexuel.

Je vais très rapidement présenter Action ontarienne. Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes, nous sommes un regroupement francophone provincial d'organismes qui luttent contre la violence faite aux femmes dans la province. Nos membres sont des maisons d'hébergement, ce sont des centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel, donc les CALACS, et des centres qui offrent des programmes de lutte contre la violence faite aux femmes.

En fait, on a un triple mandat. On travaille à la fois en violence conjugale, en violence à caractère sexuel, et on travaille aussi contre d'autres formes de violence comme, par exemple, la prostitution.

On a plusieurs objectifs. La première chose, c'est de favoriser la concertation entre les organismes francophones de lutte contre la violence faite aux femmes. On aide aussi les intervenantes dans les centres en leur proposant, par exemple, de la formation. On produit des ressources en français pour l'ensemble de la province. Puis, en dernier, on développe et on coordonne des campagnes de sensibilisation et d'information sur la violence faite aux femmes.

Par exemple, une des campagnes, qu'on a codéveloppée avec un organisme anglophone, s'appelle Traçons-les-limites. Cette campagne vise à sensibiliser les personnes de l'entourage aux violences à caractère sexuel.

En fait, on travaille depuis maintenant presque 30 ans dans le domaine. C'est pour ça qu'on est venu aujourd'hui vous parler, parce qu'on pense avoir au moins une légère expertise dans le domaine. Je voudrais aussi préciser que comme nous sommes un organisme francophone, je vais principalement parler des besoins de la population et de la communauté franco-ontarienne dans ma présentation.

Avant d'aller un peu plus en profondeur dans ma présentation, je pense qu'il faudrait d'abord revenir un peu dans le contexte et parler du contexte social dans lequel les agressions à caractère sexuel arrivent. Je pense que vous l'avez déjà entendu de nombreuses fois, mais je pense que c'est quand même important aussi de le rappeler : il existe encore de très nombreux mythes autour des agressions à caractère sexuel. Malheureusement, tant qu'on ne va pas défaire ces mythes, on n'arrivera pas à trouver de solutions et à changer les choses.

Il faut quand même savoir que pour beaucoup de personnes encore aujourd'hui, une agression sexuelle est

un viol uniquement. Ils ont l'image, le fantasme, du viol d'une jeune femme qui va se faire violer dans la rue, tard le soir, par un inconnu. C'est à peu près la seule image. Quand on parle d'agression sexuelle, c'est pratiquement la première chose qui vient à la tête des gens.

Pour aussi encore beaucoup de personnes, trop de personnes, les femmes sont en partie responsables. Ils pensent que les femmes sont en partie responsables des agressions parce qu'elles portaient une jupe trop courte ou parce que, par exemple, elles avaient bu.

Donc tous ces mythes-là, en fait, faussent complètement la perception et ils ont pour effet qu'une femme qui a été agressée sexuellement ne va pas oser en parler parce qu'elle va avoir peur. Elle va avoir peur d'être blâmée, d'être jugée, ou qu'on lui dise que c'est de sa faute. En même temps on voit que les agresseurs, qui sont les seuls responsables de l'agression, eux vont être totalement déresponsabilisés, voire même, dans certains cas, complètement excusés de l'agression. Pour ça, il suffit juste de regarder quotidiennement et pratiquement dans les médias, soit dans les médias traditionnels ou les médias sociaux, et vous verrez. Décortiquer les articles de journaux, c'est très révélateur pour voir comment on parle d'une agression sexuelle. À chaque fois, on essaie de pointer le doigt sur ce que la femme avait fait de mal.

Pour nous, pour lutter efficacement contre la violence à caractère sexuel, il y a trois choses à faire. La première chose serait la sensibilisation du public. La deuxième chose, c'est le soutien aux survivantes. La troisième chose, c'est de tenir les agresseurs responsables de leurs actes.

Pour la sensibilisation, on pense qu'il faudrait la commencer dès le plus jeune âge parce qu'on sait que plus les personnes sont sensibilisées jeunes à une cause, plus la sensibilisation est efficace. Donc, dans le cas des agressions à caractère sexuel, plus on éduquera jeune, moins il y aura d'agressions sexuelles. Pour ça, on soutient le gouvernement de l'Ontario dans la mise en oeuvre du nouveau plan d'éducation physique et santé, parce que pour nous il est vraiment primordial, et je dis bien primordial, d'enseigner aux jeunes ce que c'est que le consentement. Les jeunes ont besoin d'apprendre très tôt qu'ils ont le droit de refuser un acte de nature sexuelle, et ils doivent aussi apprendre très tôt qu'il faut entendre le refus de l'autre. Quand je dis très tôt, évidemment, c'est selon l'âge approprié et avec des mots appropriés à chaque âge.

Il faut que les jeunes apprennent très tôt ce que c'est que l'intimité, le consentement et la sexualité. Tout ça permettrait d'éviter des cas d'inceste, ça permettrait d'éviter des cas d'abus sexuels sur les jeunes, mais ça permettrait aussi aux jeunes de grandir avec une notion saine et une idée saine de ce que c'est que la sexualité et de ce que c'est qu'une agression sexuelle.

La sensibilisation devrait aussi toucher, évidemment, les adultes. On sait que plus on va faire de sensibilisation, plus les femmes vont parler des agressions qu'elles ont subies. Elles vont se sentir plus à l'aise, plus en sécurité et plus en confiance pour en parler. On sait aussi que

généralement, la première fois qu'elles osent en parler, c'est à une personne de leur entourage. Le problème, c'est que si les personnes de l'entourage ne sont pas bien sensibilisées, elles pourraient avoir une mauvaise réponse et bloquer complètement les femmes après. Si une femme qui vient dévoiler ce qu'elle a subi se sent blâmée et revictimisée, elle se taira tout le temps et elle n'ira pas chercher de l'aide. Donc, ça ne sera absolument pas efficace.

Il faut absolument que le public sache quoi dire et surtout quoi ne pas dire. Il faudrait aussi que le public connaisse tous les organismes communautaires qui sont capables d'aider, dans la communauté, les survivantes pour ensuite pouvoir les référer.

Pour nous, les campagnes les plus efficaces sont celles qui s'adressent aux personnes de l'entourage et qui leur proposent vraiment des solutions. On ne propose pas aux personnes de l'entourage de devenir des super-héros, mais simplement des choses très simples sur quoi faire lorsqu'elles sont témoins d'une agression sexuelle, ou comment soutenir efficacement une personne qui a été agressée.

C'est ce qu'on essaie de faire avec la campagne Traçons-les-limites. Cette campagne vise à défaire les mythes sur les agressions à caractère sexuel. Elle vise aussi à informer le public sur la réalité des agressions et à proposer des pistes, c'est ça, des moyens d'intervention et des pistes de solution pour essayer de prévenir les agressions sexuelles.

La sensibilisation devrait être faite par des personnes qui sont expertes du domaine. Pour nous, ce sont les intervenantes dans les CALACS qui sont les plus à même de sensibiliser les jeunes et la communauté à la réalité des agressions sexuelles, parce que c'est leur spécialité et elles sont formées pour ça. Elles ont aussi les outils et les programmes pour faire ça dans la communauté et dans les écoles secondaires.

Par contre, une recommandation qu'on fait au gouvernement et qu'on vous fait à vous, c'est de plus financer les activités de sensibilisation des CALACS. On voit que dans la majorité des CALACS francophones, il y a très peu de financement et il n'y a généralement pas de poste spécifique à la sensibilisation, alors qu'il y a beaucoup de travail à faire et qu'il y a beaucoup de demande. Malheureusement, elles ne peuvent pas faire autant qu'elles pourraient faire si elles avaient plus de financement. On a l'impression que dans le plan d'action, la prévention des agressions sexuelles est une priorité, donc il faudrait aussi que le gouvernement finance plus ces activités-là.

Les CALACS ont un double mandat, donc à la fois faire de la sensibilisation et puis aussi proposer du soutien aux survivantes, évidemment.

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Le soutien aux survivantes, ça se fait avec plusieurs services : du counselling individuel, des groupes de soutien ou des accompagnements. Par exemple, elles accompagnent les femmes dans les hôpitaux ou à porter plainte, par exemple.

Le rôle des CALACS est vraiment très important à ce niveau pour le soutien des survivantes parce qu'ils ont une approche féministe. Je vais vous expliquer un peu ce que c'est que l'approche féministe. C'est une approche, en fait, qui met la femme au centre de l'intervention. Ça va lui permettre de reprendre le contrôle de sa vie et ça va lui permettre de prendre des décisions qui sont vraiment libres et éclairées. L'intervenante va accompagner la femme aussi longtemps que la femme le décidera. Ça peut être une rencontre. Ça peut être des rencontres pendant une année, deux ans, trois ans, tant que la femme en aura besoin. Les intervenantes vont aussi donner toutes les informations utiles et pertinentes pour la femme. Elles vont lui offrir toutes les options possibles, mais au final, c'est la femme qui fera ses propres choix. L'intervenante la laissera complètement maîtresse de la situation.

Les CALACS aussi ont l'avantage d'avoir des services confidentiels et gratuits, ce qui permet aux femmes d'y avoir facilement accès. Puis, les intervenantes dans les CALACS sont aussi sensibilisées aux spécificités que rencontrent certaines femmes, notamment les femmes qui sont en situation de handicap ou des femmes immigrantes. Puis, surtout, et je vais insister là-dessus, c'est que les CALACS francophones travaillent avec le principe du par et pour les femmes d'expression française en Ontario. Je vous laisse imaginer que ce n'est pas facile de parler du fait qu'on a subi une agression sexuelle. Le faire dans une langue qui n'est pas la sienne, c'est vraiment une barrière supplémentaire. On sait que les femmes qui vont dans les CALACS apprécient vraiment de pouvoir le faire en français.

Là, je dois vous dire que nous sommes très inquiètes dans le réseau francophone en Ontario de voir que dans le plan d'action qui a été proposé en mars dernier par le gouvernement, il n'y a aucune mention de l'importance des services en français et des besoins des femmes francophones, alors que dans le plan de 2011, il y avait une section qui était réservée à ça. Donc, nous sommes inquiètes, je vous le dis, et nous espérons que les services en français et les besoins des femmes francophones sont toujours une priorité du gouvernement et de l'Assemblée législative en Ontario. On espère que toutes les mesures que vous prendrez seront pour les femmes de la majorité, les femmes immigrantes, mais aussi pour les femmes francophones en fonction de leurs besoins.

J'aimerais quand même préciser aussi que les CALACS—on a besoin que le gouvernement reconnaisse l'expertise des CALACS francophones et le rôle important qu'ils jouent auprès des femmes francophones dans les communautés. On aimerait demander au gouvernement de ne plus investir dans les services dits bilingues parce qu'on sait que, dans les faits, ils ne sont pas très efficaces pour les femmes francophones. Souvent des personnes dites bilingues sont engagées mais ne sont pas capables d'avoir des conversations en français. Donc, ce n'est pas aider les femmes de faire ça.

Au contraire, le gouvernement devrait favoriser la création de CALACS francophones là où il y a encore des besoins. Il y en a plusieurs dans la province dans les

différentes régions, mais on en a besoin de plus. Le gouvernement devrait aussi penser à financer plus les CALACS existants, à la fois en matière de sensibilisation mais aussi dans leurs services en règle générale, pour qu'ils puissent offrir plus de services à plus de femmes dans toute la communauté. Il faudrait aussi penser à pouvoir augmenter les conditions salariales dans les CALACS pour les intervenantes.

Comme je l'ai mentionné, en plus de la sensibilisation et du soutien aux survivantes, on devrait aussi s'assurer que les agresseurs soient tenus responsables des agressions. Pour ça, il faudrait que la société et notamment les médias arrêtent de faire porter la responsabilité des agressions sur les femmes et la fassent vraiment porter sur les agresseurs. Il faut aussi qu'il y ait une réponse adéquate par le système judiciaire. Actuellement, très peu de femmes portent plainte et encore moins d'agresseurs sont reconnus coupables, et ça, ce n'est vraiment pas normal.

Le fait d'améliorer la formation des policiers et des procureurs pourrait permettre d'améliorer la situation. Ça pourrait permettre peut-être à plus de femmes de porter plainte. Ça pourrait éviter que les femmes soient revictimisées pendant tout le processus et ça pourrait peut-être amener au final que plus d'agresseurs soient condamnés et soient poursuivis.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Vous avez une minute.

M^{me} Maira Martin: OK. Donc c'est pour ça que nous soutenons le plan d'action sur la formation.

Pour conclure, on aimerait mentionner que pour une lutte efficace contre la violence à caractère sexuel, il faudrait une concertation. Il faut une réponse concertée et cohérente. Il faut que le gouvernement provincial travaille avec les organismes communautaires et aussi avec les survivantes. Action ontarienne est là pour vous aider à mettre en place toutes ces mesures et à être consultée.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci. Est-ce que je peux parler en anglais?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Oui.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Our first question for you is from our NDP caucus: MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for your presentation. You made some interesting points that we haven't actually heard before.

I'm not sure if you were here earlier. We had a presentation from a teacher who had worked with French-speaking students in Ottawa and talked about some of the cultural barriers that those French-speaking students from other countries experienced in talking about their lives. You must work with a lot of French-speaking women who come to Canada from other countries. Can you tell us a little bit about some of the challenges and supports that you need to work effectively with those francophone newcomers or French-speaking newcomers to Ontario?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Est-ce que c'est correct si je parle en français?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes.

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci. C'est vrai qu'il y a une grande communauté immigrante francophone qui arrive. La difficulté pour les femmes qui arrivent, c'est déjà tout le tabou qu'il y a autour des agressions sexuelles. Ça, c'est vrai déjà, évidemment, au Canada, mais ça peut être aussi le cas dans de nombreuses communautés et cultures qui arrivent au Canada.

Donc, la première chose pour ça serait, encore une fois, la sensibilisation : parler et expliquer aux femmes et filles immigrantes les lois au Canada, notamment en ce qui concerne le viol conjugal, parce que beaucoup—encore une fois, même au Canada, mais aussi dans d'autres cultures—pensent encore que les relations sexuelles dans le mariage sont encore un devoir conjugal; donc expliquer, par exemple, qu'au Canada tout ça est illégal, et faire encore beaucoup de sensibilisation, et puis, aussi, avoir des programmes plus spécifiques qui sont offerts aux femmes immigrantes par les CALACS, mais aussi soutenir des organismes qui travaillent directement avec les personnes immigrantes.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci. Et maintenant, MPP Lalonde.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Madame Martin, merci beaucoup de votre présentation; elle est bien appréciée. Moi, j'aimerais vraiment que peut-être vous me parliez un petit peu des défis que rencontrent les femmes franco-ontariennes par rapport aux services de santé, de justice, etc., à travers la province par rapport à ce que vous nous dites.

M^{me} Maira Martin: La plus grande difficulté que rencontrent les femmes—là, je vais parler des femmes qui sont dans des régions désignées par la loi. Même dans les régions désignées par la loi, les femmes ont d'assez grandes difficultés à avoir accès à des services en français pendant toutes leurs démarches.

Dans l'est ontarien, on est relativement chanceux parce que c'est quand même très francophone, mais par exemple, si on parle de Toronto ou de la région de London, de Sudbury ou du nord de l'Ontario, là, elles peuvent avoir beaucoup de difficulté, par exemple, quand elles vont à l'hôpital, à avoir des médecins, des infirmières ou des infirmiers qui parlent français. Quand elles vont à la cour, ça peut être difficile—là, je vais parler aussi pour les femmes qui sont victimes de violence conjugale—à avoir accès à des avocats qui parlent en français et d'avoir accès à toute la procédure en français. C'est que, généralement, elles vont parfois arriver avec des gens qui vont se dire bilingues, mais au final, quand elles vont commencer à parler en français, elles vont se rendre compte que les personnes en face ne vont pas être vraiment capables de répondre. C'est vraiment la plus grande difficulté : qu'elles aient accès à un réseau complet de services en français. C'est le plus gros enjeu pour les femmes francophones.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Très rapidement : on a combien de CALACS à travers la province en ce moment?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Il y a neuf CALACS francophones, et il y a d'autres programmes qui offrent des services en agression à caractère sexuel.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Merci beaucoup.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Scott.

And I do want to welcome MPP Yakabuski, who has now joined the PC caucus.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you for being here today. You've highlighted a problem that I didn't realize was such a problem, especially in obtaining bilingual lawyers—well, bilingual as in who actually speak the fluent French that you need.

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Can you help us with some kind of solution? You can reiterate maybe what you said before, but just develop that a little bit more of how we can assist. In French, I didn't think it would be such a problem. Other languages for newer communities coming to the province—but you've kind of surprised me when you said that the services just aren't as available, especially on the legal side. Can you expand a little bit on that?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci de me dire ça parce que ça me prouve que j'ai bien fait de venir ici aujourd'hui.

Les services en français, honnêtement—je viens d'un organisme francophone; je suis francophone. Donc, je pense que plus pourrait être fait pour les femmes francophones en règle générale. Au niveau légal—et ça c'est notre plus grande difficulté : comment trouver, par exemple, des avocates francophones qui sont sensibilisées à la violence faite aux femmes? On essaie de mobiliser les femmes avocates. On préférerait avoir des femmes mais évidemment des hommes aussi qui sont alliés. C'est vraiment très difficile de trouver ça.

Dans le plan c'est spécifié, par exemple, que vous voulez essayer de proposer aux femmes des conseils juridiques indépendants quand leur cause sera entendue devant la cour. Ça, je peux déjà vous dire qu'en français, ce sera extrêmement difficile parce qu'on n'arrive même pas à avoir la même chose devant les Cours de la famille où la représentation est obligatoire. Les femmes victimes de violence conjugale qui vont en cour de droit de la famille ont d'énormes difficultés à trouver des avocats francophones. Aller trouver des avocats en criminel alors qu'elles ne sont pas obligées d'être représentées sera un énorme défi.

Donc, je peux vous inviter vraiment—n'hésitez pas à venir nous consulter. Les CALACS ou Action ontarienne, on pourra vraiment vous aider ici à trouver des solutions concrètes. Mais la plus grande difficulté c'est, quand vous prendrez des mesures, que c'est toujours gardé en tête ce que doit être fait pour les femmes francophones. Voyez si ce sera possible de le faire pour les femmes francophones, parce qu'encore une fois, avec la Loi sur les services en français et dans 25 régions désignées, vous devez le faire.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Merci.

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you now to join our audience, if you wish to.

Committee members, I'm told that our next presenter, Jennifer Valiquette, is not going to be with us today, but she is going to be handing in a written submission.

WOMEN'S SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE OF RENFREW COUNTY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would now like to bring forward a representative with the Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County. Please come forward.

Good morning.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Make yourself comfortable. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. So please begin by stating your name for the record.

Ms. Bev Ritza: My name is Bev Ritza. I'm here from the Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Okay. The Women's Sexual Assault Centre, also known as WSAC, was established in 1993, some 22 years ago. We're here talking about sexual harassment and sexual assault.

I must say that I've been relatively lucky in that regard. However, sexual harassment in the workplace has been a part of my story. My first experience began at the age of 16 in my first job. The boss came forward with inappropriate comments, inappropriate touches, and eventually showed up at my home on a weekend when he knew my parents were away. Given the dynamics of close kinship ties in Renfrew county, it's not surprising that my boss was also a distant relative. Word of mouth and family ties get you jobs in the Valley. I, like so many others, never talked about that, never mentioned it to anyone. I didn't see it as sexual harassment at the time at all. It was just the way things were.

In my adult years, I've been listening to and working with women who have experienced violence since 1988 within the shelter system, and since 2006 at the rape crisis centre with women who have experienced sexual violence.

WSAC supports survivors throughout a landmass that is larger than Prince Edward Island at just under 7,500 square kilometres, with a population of just over 106,000 people, and we do that all with an annual budget of \$252,000 per year. I believe everyone has sort of a map of the area to give you an idea of where we are. We recently learned that Toronto's not really sure where we are. We had a woman coming up to visit various agencies who was quite certain she could come up, have lunch and probably be back for afternoon tea in Toronto after visiting several locations.

We have had two changes in funding in 22 years and actually lost 5% in 1995. Our most recent sunshine list in Renfrew county tells us that our three local judges individually earn more than our entire program. We're funded by the same ministry. This, when a multitude of reports indicate that 92% of survivors of sexual violence do not engage with the judicial system.

Renfrew county is very large and is mostly rural. Renfrew county comprises other unique facets, including one of the largest military bases in Canada, Garrison Petawawa, one post-secondary campus, an aboriginal community, a small francophone community and a growing aging population.

WSAC has a staff of three women who, collectively, have 67 years of supporting survivors, and, at any time, between 25 and 30 active volunteers. Consistently, our women volunteers provide the equivalent of 4.5 full-time workers each year—unpaid volunteer time.

This past year, we received 2,699 contacts with survivors and their families, including crisis calls, face-to-face intervention and support, court accompaniment, police accompaniment and drop-ins. Staff, with the support of volunteers, are active in a variety of county-wide committees and numerous public education events.

What we have come to know over 22 years is that sexual assault and harassment is a constant daily part of women and children's lived experience and that reality takes a great toll on women's lives.

Misconceptions about sexual violence contribute to both individual and community responses to this gender-based crime. Misconceptions, including victim-blaming, denial of prevalence and lack of knowledge, can impact survivors of sexual assault directly; for example, by functioning to "cause people to minimize or question the experiences of victims/survivors," "blame the victim/survivor and contribute to the barriers they experience," and "excuse perpetrators' actions." That's from the Learning Network.

Rural women experiencing sexual violence face a complex array of concerns that urban women do not:

- In rural settings violence and abuse are often easily hidden and ignored. Geographical remoteness makes it easier to hide abuse.

- Sexual violence carries particular stigma in rural areas.

- Rural women are seen as violating community norms by their peers and family if they seek help.

- Traditional norms are more prevalent in rural areas and so are patriarchal attitudes that devalue and objectify women.

- Although poverty affects everyone in rural or urban settings, the rural poor experience of poverty manifests itself differently, mostly around access to transportation and less opportunities for employment and wage levels that support sustainability.

- In Renfrew county, there is "an abundance of weapons ... as well as numerous situations where the judiciary allows the return of the weapons to the offender for hunting season." That's a quote from VWAP East region.

- Renfrew county has no LGBT-identified organization that offers support, and WSAC has taken that leadership role for 22 years.

At present, WSAC has a two-year grant from Status of Women Canada to ask survivors of sexual violence what is working in Renfrew county, what needs attention, and how to better inform the sexual assault protocol for

Renfrew county. This is what we have learned so far from survivors of sexual violence at the halfway mark of the Status project:

In 2014-15, 162 survivors of sexual violence came forward either in person, through an online survey or in focus groups. When asked, "Why aren't people accessing services?" responses included:

"I didn't know what I needed at the time of being raped."

"I wasn't ready to tell my story to anyone."

"I didn't know what services were available."

"I was worried about confidentiality and privacy."

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In Renfrew county, it's really a small town. Everyone knows everyone or is related to them. Family history tells me that our local member's father is responsible for introducing my parents. Everybody is connected there.

Mr. John Yakubski: Multi-tasking.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Your father did it, not you.

So everybody is related. Everybody knows everybody. By virtue of your last name, everybody is trying to connect everybody.

They also told us that they couldn't get to services because there's no bus and they have no money.

"I was a child at the time of being raped, and my father wouldn't let me tell because it was my uncle."

"I didn't know that I had experienced sexual harassment."

"I did not want to be blamed that my actions 'caused' the rape."

"There's such a big military community here that when I say I experience PTSD, people say it's impossible that I never served in the military."

"Renfrew county subscribes to archaic gender roles—'Boys will be boys'—and that shapes most people's understanding of sexual violence."

"Rural communities are so judgemental, and my reputation would be destroyed if I talked about my experience of rape, especially because my abuser lives in the Valley too—and he is a 'good' man."

"I didn't report but my boyfriend did it for me—he took my choice away."

Those are some of the things that the women have told us.

Trends and themes and concerns the project has identified:

- notable confidentiality concerns;
- less choice of services;
- less awareness of available support;
- high transportation costs; and
- high travel times.

Some of the gaps are a lack of information, or a lot of misinformation, concerning victims' rights and reporting processes.

Programs and services that were identified as supportive to survivors in Renfrew county include:

—outreach and information about the realities of sexual violence;

—community awareness and public education on sexual violence;

—training and education on responding to sexual violence disclosures for professionals, allies and lay people; and, last but not least

—validation of the impacts of sexual violence on the survivor.

When asked, "What is one thing that could make Renfrew county a more supportive place for survivors?" these were the answers:

—support groups and ways for survivors to connect;

—more public education and awareness of sexual violence issues, especially in schools;

—more awareness of existing services;

—more counsellors, since we currently have two free therapists in the entire Valley, and for most the cost of anybody in private practice is prohibitive; and

—compassion training for police.

Year 2 of the Status project will see us developing strategies to address the identified goals.

One of the great strengths of Renfrew county is that while we have very few support services for survivors of sexual violence, we have close ties with our community partners, who have also been doing this work for a long time, including the Victim/Witness Assistance Program staff, victims' services staff and the hospital-based Assault Response Team. All these women have been supporting survivors in Renfrew county for a very long time. We are committed and dedicated experts who are friends with each other. These connections mean that survivors often receive a quick response because we can make a quick phone call.

On another note, something that is rarely addressed in discussions about sexual violence is the toll that the work of supporting survivors, advocating for change and doing social justice activism takes on the front-line workers. That is especially true in rural areas, where you have three staff who have consistently committed to supporting survivors of sexual violence and who are readily recognizable in the bank, at the grocery store, the post office and restaurants, where disclosures and resource information are sought by survivors, family, friends, the car repair guy etc. on a regular basis. We liken ourselves to doctors, pastors and priests, who are always on duty, always on, because we're never anonymous.

We often experience disbelief that sexual violence exists in Renfrew county—it always happens away somewhere in a big city someplace. And because we work for a non-profit rape crisis centre with inadequate funding, there's no pension or retirement fund, so we will be the elderly poor in the not-so-distant future.

The recommendations are simple:

—Adequately fund rape crisis centres and hospital-based assault programs.

—Provide funding for a wide array of public education.

—Encourage and educate and hold bystanders accountable to intervene when they see something happening.

—Hold perpetrators accountable, because the minute we stop talking about sexual violence and about holding perpetrators accountable, the minute we stop making

visible the truth of the matter, then the invisible cloak of denial is put back on and survivors are left alone in the dark.

You have the power at this table to facilitate real change. There are magic wands coming your way—fundraised magic wands. Hopefully, you can grant some wishes and that can make all the difference. Thank you for your time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Let's see all the magic wands. If only it were that easy.

Ms. Bev Ritza: If only.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And if we had time, it would be interesting to hear that story of how your parents came together—a different time.

Our first question for you is going to come from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi. Welcome. A pleasure to have you here. I think I mentioned to you earlier, I had the pleasure of living in Eganville for a number of years. My late husband was an OPP officer in Killaloe. The most distressing part of his job was victims of sexual assault and partner violence. So I have no doubt that he worked with you in the past, and some of your colleagues as well.

The two things that resonated with me, that feel like daunting challenges for you—and I'm going to ask you how we can help—are around the distances in Renfrew county. Even living in Eganville, the drive to Renfrew, the drive to Pembroke and the disparity in services that exist, which I think is so important—and also the communication and education awareness programs and changing the societal norms and giving you the tools you need to change the conversations in the communities where you live in your way, in ways that make sense, taking into account the sensitive challenges you face.

Anyway, how can we help?

Ms. Bev Ritza: I'm not sure what the answer is to the transportation issue. A lovely network of buses would be wonderful but highly unlikely—just even funding so that if somebody wanted to see us, we could arrange to get them there or we could travel to them. Our travel budget is limited at best, as is our public education budget. I think it's a couple of hundred dollars per year, which doesn't cover photocopying, let alone getting to some place in Palmer Rapids one day, Deep River the next and then off to Arnprior.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Not to mention Quadeville and—

Ms. Bev Ritza: Quadeville, yes. There are lots of places to go and little time; three staff, so whenever somebody's out, it impacts the office and what's going on.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Bev, for joining us today. It's my first time on the committee.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Mine too.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm not a sitting member of the committee, but I'm glad that I was able to make it today.

I'm sorry about your assault experience as a young person, but you're not the only one that I—

Ms. Bev Ritza: In no way is that a unique experience.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No. I've heard that from more than a few people in my lifetime. I think that what you talked about, how easily it is hidden in rural communities, is a real fact of life. People don't talk when it's stuff they don't want to talk about. I think your experience is something that is not unique probably in rural communities across the province, but it's certainly one that this committee needs to hear about.

How long have you been at the rape crisis centre?

Ms. Bev Ritza: Since 2006.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Since 2006, so nine years. You said the budget is \$250,000 a year. Last year, you had almost 2,700 contacts. That's less than \$100 per contact to provide all the services of that centre. Now those contacts, the 2,699 contacts: Would some of them have been re-contacts of the same people?

Ms. Bev Ritza: Some of them would have been, yes.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Right. In your nine years, because there has certainly been a tremendous amount of focus—obviously not enough, but we talk about this all the time. Maybe talk is not enough; I understand that, but it is not something that is, in the big picture, ignored anymore. We recognize what a challenge and what a crisis it is. Have we seen, from your perspective, any improvement in those nine years or are we treading water, or in fact are we falling behind?

Ms. Bev Ritza: Until recently, I would have said we were falling behind, that sexual violence was very much going back under the carpet, behind closed doors and not being spoken about. I think recent public events—the CBC—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Jian Ghomeshi.

Ms. Bev Ritza: —Jian Ghomeshi, Bill Cosby, the military reports—have given women a little more incentive maybe to talk, a little more belief that maybe they will be believed.

Mr. John Yakabuski: What about the establishment of this committee as of itself? Will this be helpful?

Ms. Bev Ritza: This is helpful. This makes us hopeful. I guess it depends on where this goes.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Right.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final comment for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for your presentation. One of the things that really struck me was your comment about the lack of privacy and confidentiality, which is a real barrier for women, even when they know about the services. So public awareness, breaking stigma, those are long-term strategies to make women feel more comfortable to report and to challenge some of these community norms. In the short term, do you have some specific strategies to try to address these concerns about confidentiality and privacy as barriers to women accessing services?

Ms. Bev Ritza: It's something we repeat continually. We explain the service, how we work and things like that. People are afraid that when they pick up the phone,

they might know me from my daughter's school and that I might look at them differently, or that my co-worker would know them from the military base. We are mainly staffed by volunteers, so you would have 25 to 30 women from all corners of the county who may get a call from their next-door neighbour. So there are concerns of that nature.

All of our advertising includes talking about confidentiality. We reassure every contact we make that this is absolutely confidential, and we absolutely act under that. It's an education piece. It's fear-based.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, our next presenter is not here, so if you are available for this—and I apologize, MPP Yakabuski, for being abrupt with you, but we can continue the conversation because our next presenter is not here yet.

So MPP Scott, you had a comment you wanted to make?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Well, I was just going to ask — because I thought you were rushing off—if everybody would hold their wands and get a picture taken.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Okay. That would be wonderful.

Ms. Laurie Scott: And you can do real questions—

Mr. John Fraser: Han and I will have to hold ours together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: There you are. But we can ask some other questions. I'm sure Mr. Yakabuski has more questions.

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm going to make a suggestion, and that is for caucus members on this side to come and stand—

Ms. Bev Ritza: This is the value of the wands. It takes a horrible subject and makes it a little bit fun, which is not the easiest thing in the world to do.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, exactly.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Members, we're going to have a recess to take this picture. We are officially recessed for a few moments.

The committee recessed from 1114 to 1128.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT CENTRE OF OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, we're ready to continue now with our hearings this morning. I see that we have our next presenters: the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa. Good morning. Welcome. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: I'm Zahrah Hajali.

Ms. Brie Davies: Hi. My name is Brie Davies.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin any time.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: In just introducing myself and what I do at SASC, I am the program coordinator for the Young Women at Risk Program.

Ms. Brie Davies: My name is Brie Davies. I'm the direct service coordinator at the Sexual Assault Support Centre.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: We would just like to acknowledge that we are in no way going to be able to speak the realities and the truth of all survivors of sexual violence, and would like to recognize our place of privilege in being here and presenting to you today.

Ms. Brie Davies: The Sexual Assault Support Centre is a grassroots, anti-oppressive, feminist, collective support centre. We are survivor-trained, survivor-directed and survivor-run. We have over 32 years of experience supporting women survivors in Ottawa. We have a long-standing, positive history in the community, and we have many partnerships with other community organizations.

We're survivor-directed because we work to respond to the needs of women in the community. We're survivor-run because most of our support workers are also survivors of sexual violence. We're survivor-trained because we are trained by people who are survivors of sexual violence, and we take all our direction from survivors themselves.

We offer our support within a non-clinical, peer-support-based model. We do not require that the women who come for our services have any formal identification or formal health cards or fill out paperwork to come to seek our services. Our motto, or our saying, is that we are the women that call the lines, so we are the women that provide the support.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: I'd like to just further highlight an aspect of it, the feminist peer support, that we think is crucial in supporting survivors of sexual violence.

The anti-oppressive framework and feminist lens allows us to do this work in a much more cost-effective and empowering way for survivors, because it truly tailors the support to women based on their experiences. We firmly believe that women are the experts of their own lives and their own healing and should be respected for the choices that they make, that peer support models acknowledge the struggles of surviving sexual violence, that there are many common reactions to surviving sexual violence, and there are many ways to cope with those reactions, and all of those coping methods are valid and legit and should be seen as a normal way of coping. There is, therefore, no right or wrong way to cope.

Peer support models also are pro-choice. They recognize that women are in different places in their healing, and, therefore, should be respected for the pace that it takes them to go through their healing process.

Ms. Brie Davies: Part of our support is that we are reaching out to the most marginalized members of society in the Ottawa community. We talk about marginalized women and women-identified folks. Who we're talking about are people such as sex trade workers, criminalized young women, women who have been involved with CAS, precariously housed young women, women who may be living on the street, women who don't have status in Canada, newcomers, refugees, transwomen, ritual and cult abuse survivors—and this list is not exhaustive. We can't speak for the realities of all marginalized women, but we recognize that these women are not often being serviced well by mainstream organizations,

and these are the groups that we outreach to in the community and serve within our centre.

SASC sees that sexual violence is about power, control and domination; it's not about sex. These things—power, control, domination and oppression—are things that our collective seeks to reject and overcome. That includes the larger context of all types of violence and oppression, and we recognize that you can't separate out sexual violence from oppression, because women and folks—they don't experience sexual violence separate from oppression.

Women also experience oppression based on their race, class, sexual identity, sexual preference and ability, and those things are experienced together. So we need a commitment to end sexual violence that also includes a commitment to end all other types of oppression. Our anti-oppression work is integral to the work that we do within our organization and our outreach work.

So, I like I said, SASC recognizes the intersectionality of oppression, and that it amplifies the impact of sexual violence. For example, a woman who survives ritual or cult abuse could be experiencing economic marginalization because of her inability to find work due to disability. She could then be a psychiatric survivor due to the impact of the psychiatric system and stigma. She may also be a woman of colour who is experiencing daily racism, and this would impact on her ability to heal from the sexual violence.

These intersecting oppressions are often not recognized by mainstream organizations, which could just blame somebody or somebody may be told that they're not healing fast enough, but it's not taking into account that it's not just the sexual violence, but all these layered impacts. This is what our organization seeks to take into account.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Which brings us to experiences of systematic oppression. We cannot exclude that from the practice of perpetuating sexual violence, which creates barriers and systematically perpetuates violence on survivors through the court system, children's aid societies, hospital, police, medical field, group homes, professionals, which re-traumatize, re-victimize and disempower survivors of sexual violence. For example, a woman survivor who has experienced criminalization could also be a survivor of being in the foster care system and experiencing sexual violence in group home settings, who then might choose to parent at a young age and experience the stigma and red-flagging through the child welfare system and have to work to break the barriers associated with that. So her struggle as a survivor doesn't start with her healing from sexual violence; it starts with her being able to advocate for herself so that she's not stigmatized, she's not red-flagged, and she has the right to parent and the right to live a life that is dictated by her and led by her choices.

I think the microphone went off. Did it go off?

Interjection.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: It's good? Okay, sorry.

The way we support women in a peer support model is based on empowerment and allowing women the oppor-

tunity to grow and develop within themselves, have the right to advocate for themselves—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Can you bring the microphone closer or lean in a bit? Thank you.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Yes. I think it went off.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): When you see the red light on, that means it's on. You just need to either talk a little louder or lean a little closer.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Perfect. Thank you.

Our models of advocacy and empowerment are crucial in breaking these barriers for women. In a peer support model, women work to validate each other's experiences and not feel alone in the systematic oppression they experience, which is also a testament of the political use of rape and the systematic use of rape to undermine women. We see rape used as a tool of war and rape used as a tool of colonization, which has great impacts on aboriginal women and also goes further than just what we see in other countries. When we're talking about the military and the attitudes that the military carry around sexual violence, we have to recognize that that impacts other countries and other women around the world who might or might not be part of the Ontario scope and receive services from us. So it's a lot bigger and needs to be done in a way that acknowledges that.

Ms. Brie Davies: That's sort of our broader view on things. In terms of our programs, we've developed our programs based on feedback from the community and responding to the needs of the community, especially the needs of marginalized women. In terms of our general core programs, we have a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week support line, which is available to the community. We have individual support services, individual peer support. We have support groups within our centre. We have advocacy and accompaniment for women where we can accompany them to the police or to the hospital or to different places they might need to go. Then we also have specialized services within our centre for more marginalized groups.

One of those is support services for survivors of ritual and cult abuse, which is a group of women that don't have very many services—or any services—in the Ottawa area. Those women are very marginalized and have often also been abused within the psychiatric system because their stories haven't been believed. Their abuse has often been perpetrated by people in positions of power, and because some of the stories of their trauma often sound unbelievable or very strange, many times they have not been believed, so we have a peer support group for survivors of ritual abuse in our centre.

Zahrah will tell you about some of our other programs.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: We have our Young Women at Risk program, which is an outreach-based program specifically designed for young women between the ages of 14 and 24 who are criminalized and marginalized. The program strives to reach out to young women who are going to be the hardest to reach and the hardest to serve because of the level of stigma and oppression that they experience. Typically a lot of the work we do involves working with women who are involved in the criminal

justice system, on whatever level, who are involved in the foster care system or who have children in the foster care system, young women who are at highest risk for sexual exploitation. That's a pretty big thing.

I don't know if you listen to the news, but there was a big thing this morning about two 14-year-old young women who were sexually exploited. That's the typical YWAR service user. They experience sexual exploitation in exchange for very basic needs such as food, shelter and protection. Our outreach program reaches to those women by offering continuity, confidentiality and consistency—all things that are not afforded to young women typically, particularly marginalized young women, who we know are at the highest risk of experiencing sexual violence and sexual exploitation.

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We also have our Women and War program that supports survivors of war, rape and torture, who are refugee and immigrant. This program, just like all our programs, was a direct result of the need in the community. We know that women survivors of sexual violence have specialized needs, and survivors of war, rape and torture are no different. About 20 years ago, we consulted the community and figured out there were no services that acknowledged the trauma associated with war, rape and torture.

Beyond that, there are many different barriers that women experience as they come into Canada, dealing with the immigration system and the changes that come with that, that are not taking women's situations into effect, that are not tailored towards women survivors of rape and torture. Therefore, a peer support model has allowed women to grow and develop by building self-advocacy and resource- and network-building by being within an environment where their stories are valid and their stories are important.

I can't tell you enough about the level of empowerment and the amount of work that has been done in this program. What we've provided for you today is a book, which you all have a copy of, called the Unspoken Stories. It's quite an incredible thing to share with all of you, because, like we said, we can't speak for all survivors, but we hope to give voice to those who don't typically have voice.

These are just some of the examples of the programs we have at SASC and a demonstration of our peer support work as well as our ability to respond to the communities' needs when issues arise and when we know communities are not being served properly. However, there's much more work to be done.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you—

Ms. Brie Davies: We have a bit more. Do we still have more time or are we done?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining.

Ms. Brie Davies: Okay. I'll do the conclusions, then.

Basically, in conclusion, for peer support, professionalization is not the answer. Peer support is very cost-effective and outreach is very key. We recognize that

women survivors—we need to support women where they are and women are the experts on their own healing. The women survivors of sexual violence are not a homogenous group and the one-size-fits-all model doesn't work.

What we hear most from women is that they need to be believed and understood and not judged. They must be empowered and allowed to cope in any way they choose and have access to spaces that allow them to heal. Being a feminist peer support model allows us to bring voice to women who would otherwise never have their voices heard. The barriers that exist for marginalized survivors of sexual violence—in order to truly end sexual violence we must always work to end all forms of violence against all women, including fighting oppression, systemic or otherwise.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here. In your presentation, you use words about empowering the victim. We've heard a lot in this committee from a great many people. Their discussions and presentations have helped us understand many of the subtleties and the nuances that end up being barriers to reporting sex assault or sexual violence, but also how these subtleties and nuances of our legal system end up revictimizing people.

During the discussions yesterday with retired Colonel Drapeau, he was talking about this as well. One of the comments was about having an advocate or a lawyer for the victim, because at the present time the crown does not serve the victim; of course, the defence does not serve the victim. To be empowered, you also have to have knowledge of the system.

I'm just wondering if you could share with us if you're aware of any experiences where a victim has had an independent advocate or lawyer with them through the process and how that may have helped or not. And if not, your own thoughts and views on having victims of sexual violence and assault—what your thoughts would be if there was an independent advocate lawyer for victims right from the get-go, right from the start—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Hillier, please ask your question. Thank you.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes. If you have any experience with that or if—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You've just used up all your time with your question.

Just a quick answer. Thank you.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Yes. So we have examples of where, when women have had access to independent counsel, it's been really helpful in making them feel empowered and being able to take control over the legal process, which can be pretty oppressive. However, it's usually done in collaboration with community agencies and lawyers that are willing to donate their time.

Yes, something that is more concretely available to women to empower them to be able to exercise those rights is crucial. It's crucial in doing this work, particularly for marginalized communities, because they will

experience the criminal justice system at a much more oppressive rate than anyone else.

I can get into detail, but I don't think you have much time. I will encourage you to ask maybe this question to one Sunny Marriner, who might be here later on today.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: She is the founder of the Young Women at Risk program and has done a lot of work and would be a great person to also ask for an example.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. You ended your presentation by saying that professionalism is not always the answer, that peer support programs can be very effective. One of the things that this committee has heard is that reporting is not always the answer, that there have to be alternatives to reporting to help women heal. I'd be interested in your experiences and thoughts about alternatives to reporting based on the women you have served.

Ms. Brie Davies: Well, I think our perspective on reporting is that it always has to be the survivor's choice to report, and there's more about it in the written piece in terms of the double bind that people are often placed in, because there can also be so much pressure to report but the consequences of reporting are not always positive for the survivor.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Rarely positive.

Ms. Brie Davies: It can be very rarely positive. Alternatives to reporting can be getting support. I sort of feel like the whole system needs to be reworked from a survivor-directed perspective. My thought on that would be for the police and for the legal system, the hospital system, for all of the systems, for the government, to be getting advice from survivors and having the whole system be reworked from a survivor-directed perspective. Because the survivors are the experts in what it's like to survive sexual violence, so the survivor should be directing the system a little bit. There should be advisory boards for the police. There should be advisory boards for the criminal justice system, advisory boards for—everybody who interacts with survivors should be getting some advice from survivors because they're the ones who have the experience, and so maybe the systems could become a little more friendly for reporting.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. I have to say that part of our mandate is actually reaching out to some of the clients, the survivors you're meeting. So thank you for being that voice and helping as best as you can within some of the limits.

I wanted to ask you, what other way would you suggest to improve the system—I think you've touched a little bit on that—to better target those you're reaching out to, the marginalized survivors?

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Through stabilization of funding and through acknowledging the work that has been done over the 40-plus years through the sexual assault move-

ment within Ontario, I think we can make a real commitment to making these changes. We know the impact as experts in this field and we know how to work with women survivors, especially those who are marginalized, to bring voice to their concern and make a real impact and change for them.

I think that would be a starting place: to recognize the expertise that you do have within the province. You have 42 sexual assault support centres, most of them with more than 30 years' worth of history, all of them starting from a grassroots, feminist, peer support model. They've changed over the years; they have not been allowed to exist in that way. There's diversity, and that's fine. We recognize diversity, but we need to go back to the experts, and we need to be consulted continuously throughout this process, not just today but in the future. Whatever recommendations come out of here should definitely be brought back to the coalition, on a coalition level, so that we could support this process, because we know how to engage women.

It is very hard to reinvent the wheel. Grassroots always works when you're trying to make change up. Going down is a very difficult thing. Making change from the top is a very difficult thing to do.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for your insights and your recommendations today.

Committee members, if you haven't already done so, we encourage you to check out before 12 noon. It's a firm time, apparently. We will meet you down the hallway at the Albion room; it's past the elevators.

We stand adjourned until 1 p.m.

The committee recessed from 1150 to 1256.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. Our afternoon session of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment meeting in Ottawa continues.

I would like to let the members in our audience know that we are now going to go in camera; we're going to be having a private session. This will run about 20 minutes, so I would respectfully ask if we could clear the room to accommodate some people who would like to speak to us privately. We'll be opening the doors up again in 20 minutes.

The committee continued in closed session from 1258 to 1321.

CENTRE NOVAS,
CALACS FRANCOPHONE
DE PRESCOTT-RUSSELL

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our public hearings now resume. I would like to call forward Anne Jutras. Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. We understand that you're going to be speaking for about five minutes, and then—I'm sorry to inform our audience again—we're going to have to have you clear out again because we have another private presentation. For the

record, please state your name and your organization, and begin any time.

M^{me} Anne Jutras: OK. Ma présentation va être en français. Je m'appelle Anne Jutras. Je suis directrice du Centre Novas, un CALACS, Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel, de Prescott-Russell.

Mesdames et messieurs—je vois qu'il y a des messieurs aussi du comité spécial—merci pour l'occasion de parole. J'aimerais aujourd'hui vous parler de la réalité locale de Prescott-Russell, qui vient avec des défis spécifiques à ses particularités. Nous ne sommes pas une grande métropole et l'accès en général est difficile.

Notre territoire est un territoire très étendu de 2 000 kilomètres carrés. On est entouré des frontières du Québec, la rivière du comté de Stormont, Dundas et Glengarry et d'Ottawa à l'autre extrémité. C'est une communauté rurale. Donc, il y a beaucoup de fermes, et les terrains sont très éloignés les uns des autres. La distance est très grande. Il peut arriver, entre deux grands centres, d'avoir au-delà de 100 kilomètres à parcourir pour se rendre de son village à un service.

Notre communauté a une minorité francophone très présente. Par contre, il faut se souvenir que c'est la raison pour laquelle il faut continuer d'avoir des services en français mais aussi des services en français de qualité, que ce soit dans notre région, où c'est un petit peu plus français, ça va, mais le reste de l'Ontario, certains de nos collègues dans d'autres provinces n'ont pas cette opportunité-là. Donc, c'est important de continuer d'avoir des services en français et de continuer de développer des services en français pour que toutes les femmes puissent avoir accès.

Dans le fait que nous sommes une région très étendue, il y a beaucoup d'isolement entre les familles et entre les communautés. Ça, c'est un des facteurs qui font que le tabou, le grand silence autour de l'agression à caractère sexuel, reste tabou. On ne peut pas dire ces choses-là, puis on ne peut pas parler de ces choses-là. C'est encore quelque chose—tous les mythes qui entourent ça—qui est très tabou.

Je voulais juste refaire un petit peu une définition de l'agression à caractère sexuel pour vous donner un peu le contexte dans lequel on travaille. Donc, l'agression à caractère sexuel c'est vraiment du contrôle. Ça n'a rien à voir avec la sexualité. C'est un acte de domination, d'humiliation, d'abus de pouvoir et de violence. Ce sont des rapports de force inégaux entre les hommes et les femmes.

Dans ce contexte-là, il faut comprendre que ça peut prendre plusieurs formes. Dans notre communauté, il y a deux groupes de femmes qui viennent nous voir au centre. Je dois vous dire que c'est une petite portion des femmes, probablement, qui ont été agressées, parce qu'il y a beaucoup de femmes qui n'en parlent pas. Mais des femmes qui viennent nous voir, il y a deux groupes importants : un groupe où c'est des femmes de plus de 55 ans et beaucoup d'entre elles ont vécu l'inceste; et il y a

aussi une autre proportion de femmes plus jeunes, de 16 à 24 ou 30 ans, qui ont vécu des agressions plus récentes, du harcèlement. Maintenant, ce qu'on voit de plus en plus à travers tous les groupes d'âge, c'est le harcèlement sexuel criminel et la cyberviolence, donc tout ce qui passe par l'Internet, le Facebook, le Twitter, etc.

Donc, ça peut prendre ces formes-là. Ça peut aussi être de l'abus rituel, du viol par Internet, le viol en prison, le viol en temps de guerre et de conflit, et c'est aussi toutes les agressions qui peuvent être faites contre les minorités de race, les lesbiennes, les femmes à mobilité réduite, etc., la pornographie et le viol sous l'effet des drogues.

Ce qu'il faut comprendre c'est que le secret et la manipulation sont les armes de choix des agresseurs. C'est ce qui fait que les femmes vivent dans la peur et c'est ce qui fait qu'elles ne parlent pas.

Les impacts des agressions à caractère sexuel sont majeurs et prennent place dans la vie quotidienne des femmes. Les agressions attaquent la dignité et le pouvoir de la femme au plus profond d'elle. Ça laisse des séquelles qui influencent le fonctionnement au quotidien des femmes, que ce soit de la confusion au niveau des sentiments, la baisse de l'estime de soi, la difficulté de s'affirmer—certaines sont même victimes de stress post-traumatique—l'anxiété, l'angoisse, la colère contre soi-même, parce qu'il y a encore beaucoup de blâme, ou contre les autres, ou la difficulté à faire confiance.

J'aimerais que vous portiez attention particulière à ce que je dis en ce moment parce que je vais vous ramener à ça tantôt.

Souvent, elles ont le sentiment d'être seules parce qu'elles ont été isolées et le sont encore parce qu'elles ne peuvent pas parler de leur situation. Il y a beaucoup de questionnement aussi au niveau de leurs relations amoureuses et de leur orientation sexuelle. Beaucoup, beaucoup d'entre elles sont victimes de flash-backs, de cauchemars, de troubles de sommeil, de difficultés de concentration, et j'en passe. Tout ça affecte, comme de raison, la santé mentale et la santé physique des femmes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd just like you to know that there are nine minutes remaining in your time, meaning the entire time for you and the person speaking with you.

M^{me} Anne Jutras: Okay. I'll cut it short.

Au niveau des besoins des femmes, il y a des études qui ont été faites en 2013 et 2015 dans notre région particulièrement. Les données qui ont ressorti au niveau des barrières auxquelles les femmes font face, c'est de ne pas être crues, d'être revictimisées par le système légal, juridique et policier, le manque de compassion, être jugées, être étiquetées par le système médical, ne pas être écoutées et avoir à répéter, et le manque de communication entre la cour familiale et la cour criminelle dans les situations de violence faite aux femmes.

Au niveau de la confidentialité, il faut aussi que vous compreniez que dans une région comme la nôtre, où tout le monde se connaît ou tout le monde est de la famille, la confidentialité, ce n'est pas évident.

On a aussi une grande région avec plusieurs services, mais on n'a pas de centre de traitement. Donc, si les femmes acceptent de passer à travers la trousse médico-légale, elles doivent embarquer dans une voiture de police ou un taxi avec un étranger et se rendre à une heure de route. Si vous venez de vous faire violer, je ne suis pas sûre que ce soit tout le temps la meilleure solution.

Je voulais vous parler un petit peu de l'importance de la prévention, de la sensibilisation et de l'éducation. Il faut mettre beaucoup plus d'emphasis et d'importance sur la prévention, parce que c'est comme ça qu'on va réussir à éliminer la violence faite aux femmes.

Je voulais vous mentionner, vite fait, le fait que le financement est un problème. Les femmes ont besoin de ces services-là, les services que nous offrons, donc on doit avoir un financement qui est respectable et qui respecte les femmes qui travaillent dans ces CALACS-là.

La communication entre les ministères, mais aussi la communication avec les groupes comme l'Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes, qui représentent nos organismes en français, doit continuer parce que ce sont eux qui nous permettent d'aller plus loin dans nos revendications.

Donc là, ce que je voudrais faire c'est de laisser la place à trois femmes de chez nous qui voudraient vous parler un peu de leur histoire. Je vous demanderais de les croire, de les écouter, de prendre le temps de le faire, de vous rappeler que l'agresseur est responsable de ses actions et que la victime n'est que la victime.

Je leur laisse maintenant la parole. Elles ont eu beaucoup de courage de se présenter aujourd'hui, donc je vais les laisser prendre la place, si vous voulez rendre la salle à huis clos, s'il vous plaît.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We're going to ask the members of our audience if you wouldn't mind stepping out for about 10 minutes, as we are now going to hear from our next witnesses in private.

The committee continued in closed session from 1333 to 1350.

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO FIRST NATIONS WOMEN'S CAUCUS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call forward representatives with the Chiefs of Ontario First Nations Women's Caucus. Please come forward. Good afternoon.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Good afternoon.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself some water, if you'd like. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. Please begin, for the record, by stating your name.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I'm Denise Stonefish.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Begin anytime.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Good afternoon, everyone. On behalf of the Chiefs of Ontario, we appreciate the opportunity to share our submission on sexual violence and harassment with the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment. We believe that our experiences as First Nations peoples, a demographic that is largely over-represented as victims of sexual violence and harassment, will bring a unique perspective and insight that will inform the committee.

The Chiefs of Ontario is a political forum and secretariat for collective decision-making, action and advocacy for 133 member First Nation communities located within the boundaries of the province of Ontario.

For the purposes of today's submission, the Chiefs of Ontario has chosen to bring forward input from Ontario families of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls.

The Chiefs of Ontario, through its technical coordinating body, the First Nations Women's Caucus, held a planning gathering for the families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Thunder Bay on February 10, 11 and 12, 2015.

The planning gathering was a closed session between 19 Ontario First Nations families of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls and the Ontario First Nations leadership. This forum allowed for the families to share stories of their loved ones, to identify barriers and challenges that they encountered in seeking justice for the death or disappearance of their loved ones, and to provide direction on a mandate and structure of an Ontario-specific First-Nations-led inquiry to offer guidance on the purpose and role of an independent national commission of inquiry.

As an overarching principle, we believe that in order to fully understand sexual violence and harassment, we submit that it is important to consider these issues within a broader context that includes impacts to the victims, impacts to the victims' families and impacts to the victims' communities.

I'm presenting a number of points. The first one is the post-colonialism shift in perception. At the planning gathering, families shared how colonialism has led to a major shift in the perception of indigenous women and girls; the general undervaluing of the lives of indigenous women and girls, who are treated as expendable; ongoing sexual and racial violence; and the loss of our traditional teachings and understanding of what our respective roles and responsibilities are as both indigenous women and men.

Under point 1, our recommendation is to review Ontario's curriculum materials to ensure that they are free of direct or indirect racism.

Point 2: violence against First Nations women and girls. At the planning gathering, families shared how their loved one left the family home due to sexual violence in the family and that their belief was that there was a link between childhood sexual violence and the

vulnerability of young women to become involved in the sex trade.

Our recommendation 2 is that education and awareness on sexual violence and harassment must be delivered in schools and in communities.

Number 3 is the lack of support services. The families also shared:

- that there was a lack of support services available, including the following: police services, counselling, healing and understanding the justice system;

- that when they accessed existing support services, they experienced indifference and a general lack of compassion by service providers;

- that support services that are specific to First Nations culture and teachings were the most helpful to them and their families; and

- that their First Nations culture and teachings helped them to heal, mainly because these traditional methods allowed them to gather with other individuals who had similar experiences, and that left them feeling supported.

Our recommendation 3 is that culturally appropriate healing and support services are needed.

Recommendation 4 is that First Nations and knowledge keepers should be involved in the development, design and implementation of any support services to ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

Recommendation 5 is to increase coordination in the types of support services that are funded by Ontario to avoid duplication of services in one area.

Recommendation 6 is to ensure that information about support services is widely and publicly distributed to maximize use.

Recommendation 7 is to explore development, training and certification for culturally appropriate support services in rural areas—for example, safe homes, volunteers to drive victims to urban shelters etc.

Under our point 4: Programs focused on healing and taking an inclusive approach. Again, at our planning gathering, the families shared that:

- children are often directly or indirectly impacted;
- there are limited supports for the children who are impacted directly or indirectly;

- the perpetrator continues to reside in close proximity to the victim; and

- interconnectedness, whether it be within the family or within the same community, raises challenges in healing and causes fear and anxiety.

Our recommendation 8 is that culturally appropriate support services must allow for a wholesome and healing approach and include the children and other family members who witnessed the sexual violence and harassment.

Recommendation 9 is that support be provided for the implementation of community mediation programs to be designed and delivered by First Nations communities, First Nations organizations and/or First Nations experts.

Point 5: Systemic barriers for First Nations peoples.

The families shared:

- how police investigations were often improperly conducted;

- how police investigations often blamed the victim;

- how there was presence of a conflict of interest in the investigation;

- how the perpetrator is often not charged and held accountable for their offending behaviour;

- their belief that the justice system has been a profound failure;

- the fundamental differences between mainstream society's understanding of justice versus the indigenous views of justice, which is primarily based on the search for truth and closure and addressing the root causes of the offence;

- the unfairness of the offender receiving more programs and services than the victim and their family; and

- how mainstream society does not give consideration to a more serious offence against a pregnant victim.

Our recommendation 10 is that there is a need for police training and sensitivity to the issues specific to First Nations victims to allow for appropriate police response.

Recommendation 11 is that First Nations communities must be more involved in police investigations.

Recommendation 12 is that reports of police misconduct must be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Recommendation 13 is that elders should be involved in police services.

Recommendation 14 is that harsher legislation is required for offences involving pregnant women.

Recommendation 15 is to support First Nations to examine their own systems of justice.

Systemic barriers faced by First Nations victims of sexual violence and harassment must be recognized and addressed. The systemic prejudices listed above, and others that are not identified within our submission, not only alienate First Nations people, but they also limit any productive relationship between First Nations individuals and law enforcement services.

1400

In closing, we wish to reiterate our view that considerations that we bring forward to you today have the potential to begin to address the overrepresentation of First Nations individuals as victims of sexual violence and harassment. By considering the unique circumstances of First Nations victims, their families and their communities, we firmly believe it will be a step forward toward reconciling the overrepresentation of First Nations individuals as victims of sexual violence and harassment and moving towards healing First Nations persons and communities.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We have some questions for you now, beginning with our Liberal caucus. MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much, Chief Stonefish, for your presentation and your very detailed set of recommendations. I wanted to just say at the outset that the lack of inquiry into the missing and murdered aboriginal women is really something that's of great national concern.

I wanted to ask you about two things, though. In terms of a distinction between rural and urban settings, is there any differential? I know we're talking a lot about rural and policing. Is that where you see the challenge with policing, in smaller communities?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I think in terms of what the families had shared with us, there was no real distinction between on- and off-reserve.

Mr. John Fraser: Okay, that's great. That's helpful.

The other question: You spoke about harsher penalties for offences committed against pregnant women. Could you elaborate on that a little bit more?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: One of the families had shared with us, when her daughter was murdered, that she was pregnant at the time. She felt that the courts made no consideration in sentencing when the perpetrator had, in fact, taken two lives instead of one.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing before us today. You gave a lot of information, and we have a short time for questioning. We were in northern Ontario and heard from northern Ontario aboriginal communities. We've heard from southern Ontario aboriginal communities. You mentioned about servicing with police. Is there a best practice there or a combination of something, whether it's RCMP, OPP or First Nations? We actually heard that with First Nations investigations, sometimes there's a conflict because, as you said, it's small, it's rural, and everybody knows each other. Can you address that in kind of a short way? If you can't, you can email the answer in, too.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Well, if I can't specifically, I have my colleagues with me. They certainly will follow up in more detail.

I think, initially, when they talked about—there is that closeness and interconnectedness because sometimes our communities are policed by our own First Nations constables, which does at times make it difficult. That's where we feel that there need to be more thorough police investigations. Being that some of our officers may be related to the victims—we can't just dismiss what has happened based on conflict.

Ms. Laurie Scott: But you have to ask as First Nations for another police force to come in. How difficult is that—being women, I just want to say that, predominantly?

Ms. Karen Restoule: As long as they're working together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: What was the answer?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: The little voice on my shoulder—

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's fine.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: As long as both agencies are willing to work together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's what we always hope for.

Can I ask one more quick question?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sadly, we're out of time. You know how behind we are. We don't want to inconvenience the other people who are waiting.

Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. One of the continuing themes of this committee is the importance of validating the experience of survivors and those who are going through these issues dealing with sexual violence and harassment. I really appreciate the fact that these recommendations are based on people's reality. One of the things you said was around the lack of support services but later you made a recommendation around ensuring better coordination to avoid duplication. Was there ever a sense that there was a duplication of services even in the face of a lack of services?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I think that at one point there may have been a duplication of services that one of the families had encountered.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: In what area?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Jeez, I'll have to—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: We can follow up later.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I'll have to call upon—

Ms. Karen Restoule: We could get that information and forward it when we submit the written brief.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Sure. That would be excellent.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We would very much appreciate that.

Ms. Karen Restoule: For the record, Karen Restoule, director of justice with the Chiefs of Ontario. I'm the technical support to Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Scott, do you have a request?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just wondered if you could also forward—I'm doing a separate segment on human trafficking, so anything you have with aboriginal women and human trafficking—

Ms. Karen Restoule: Yes. I was going to come around to you to ask you what your additional question was.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That was it.

Ms. Karen Restoule: Great.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So please submit any other information you have to our Clerks' office.

Ms. Karen Restoule: Perfect.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have that email.

Ms. Karen Restoule: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for your presentation today. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

CALACS FRANCOPHONE D'OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call on our next presenter to come forward: Josée Guindon.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sorry. Josée, please correct me on the pronunciation of your last name.

M^{me} Josée Guindon: It's okay. I'm used to it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You will have 15 minutes to address our committee. Please begin by stating your organization's name and your name for the record.

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Josée Guindon, du CALACS francophone d'Ottawa.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin any time.

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Le CALACS est un centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel qui a été créé en 1995, suite à l'adoption de la Loi sur les services en français. Financé par le ministère de la Procureure générale de l'Ontario, nous offrons des services aux femmes francophones survivantes d'agression sexuelle. Nos services comprennent un programme de prévention et de sensibilisation qui contribue, depuis 20 ans, à changer des attitudes et engager la communauté francophone et francophile dans la lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel.

Aujourd'hui, je veux vous parler spécifiquement de notre programme de prévention et de sensibilisation qui, selon nous, est la porte d'entrée pour les services aux survivantes. On peut à tort vouloir séparer la prévention et la sensibilisation de l'offre de services directs aux victimes, mais bien que nos services soient publicisés, la majorité des survivantes qui y accèdent ont tout d'abord été en contact avec une intervenante qui était sur le terrain. À chacune des activités que nous faisons dans la communauté, des femmes nous dévoilent avoir été agressées sexuellement et de plus en plus d'hommes dévoilent avoir été témoins d'agression ou de harcèlement sexuel.

Au cours des 20 dernières années, nous avons offert plus de 5 000 ateliers dans la communauté, principalement auprès des jeunes du secondaire, des collèges et des universités. Il faut savoir qu'à Ottawa nous avons deux universités et deux collèges et deux conseils scolaires francophones qui incluent 13 écoles secondaires francophones—tout ça pour une seule intervenante en prévention et sensibilisation. Ça fait beaucoup de gens à voir pour une seule personne.

Parler d'une agression sexuelle n'est pas facile. La survivante doit être dans un environnement où elle se sent en confiance et en sécurité. Notre programme de prévention et sensibilisation offre cet environnement. Les jeunes filles et les femmes qui se confient à nous vont, pour la majorité, entamer par la suite des démarches pour des services, soit au CALACS, mais aussi au niveau juridique et dans le secteur de santé et services communautaires.

Selon notre expertise, nous savons que la clé du succès pour offrir le meilleur service possible aux survivantes est d'être sur le terrain. Nous devons rejoindre directement les jeunes filles, les femmes, les garçons et les hommes dans leur environnement et leur donner les informations nécessaires pour qu'ils puissent prendre action et dénoncer. Nos ateliers sont conçus de manière à laisser les participants trouver eux-mêmes les solutions au lieu de leur en imposer, et cela fait toute la différence.

Maintenant, je vais vous donner trois exemples de projets en prévention et sensibilisation. Le premier est notre recherche action sur la cyberagression sexuelle. Je vais faire suivre le lien pour un rapport qu'on vient tout juste de publier. C'est un projet qui est financé par Condition féminine Canada qui nous permet d'aller rencontrer des jeunes filles et garçons dans leur environnement, à l'école. Les jeunes nous partagent des cas vécus, des comportements enracinés, trouvent des solutions et font acte d'engagement concret.

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Lors d'une présentation, Julien—nom fictif—nous a partagé que, lui, il a partagé la photo de sa blonde nue. Puis il a fait une prise de conscience en disant : « C'est elle qui s'est fait manquer de respect dans cette histoire alors que c'est moi qui n'en mérite pas. J'ai honte, j'ai vraiment honte. Elle m'a fait confiance en m'envoyant sa photo et je l'ai complètement trahie. » Puis là, il s'est tourné, il a regardé ses collègues de salle de classe, puis il a dit : « Pensez-y deux fois avant de diffuser une photo qui ne vous appartient pas. » Ça, c'est un exemple concret d'un jeune qui entend un message, qui intègre et qui dit : « Voici, moi, j'ai appris quelque chose et qu'est-ce que je peux faire pour ne pas le reproduire et pour éviter que ce soit reproduit par d'autres personnes? » Permettre aux jeunes de s'exprimer et parler de leur réalité quotidienne les encourage à devenir des agents de transformation et les résultats sont concrets : dévoilement, dénonciation, accès à des services.

Deuxième exemple de projet, c'est notre projet Outreach envers les femmes immigrantes francophones d'Ottawa. C'est un projet qui est financé par la Fondation Trillium, et qui nous a permis d'embaucher une intervenante qui rejoint les femmes immigrantes directement dans leur milieu de vie.

Cette approche permet une augmentation substantielle du nombre de femmes immigrantes qui décident de dévoiler, dénoncer et accéder à des services. Au cours du dernier mois seulement, l'intervenante a rencontré une quarantaine de femmes immigrantes francophones et 75 % d'entre elles ont entamé des démarches pour obtenir des services au CALACS ou au niveau juridique.

Dernier exemple : notre travail terrain, en collaboration avec l'Université d'Ottawa. Suite aux cas d'agressions sexuelles qui ont été beaucoup médiatisés l'an dernier, l'Université d'Ottawa a reconnu l'importance et la pertinence de travailler avec le CALACS francophone d'Ottawa, un service qui est établi depuis 20 ans et qui a l'expertise pour soutenir les survivantes et pour former le personnel.

Cet été, nous offrirons une formation au personnel de l'université qui va porter sur la notion de consentement, les mythes, les formes d'agressions sexuelles, mais aussi leur transmettre les connaissances nécessaires qui leur permettront de mieux soutenir et diriger les victimes vers les services appropriés.

De plus, nous offrirons, dès l'automne, des services de soutien directs aux survivantes, étudiantes et membres du personnel, sur le campus et hors du campus. Ces services

seront totalement indépendants de ceux de l'université, ce qui permettra de réduire les craintes concernant l'administration et la confidentialité et ainsi, nous prévoyons qu'un plus grand nombre de victimes choisiront de dénoncer.

Notre collaboration comprend également une campagne promotionnelle qui informera les étudiants et le personnel des ressources et services disponibles et ce, avant même le début des cours en septembre et tout au long de l'année.

Malheureusement, les exemples de projet que je viens de vous donner ont une courte durée de vie. Il est assez facile d'aller chercher du financement pour faire du développement de services, mais il est quasi impossible d'aller chercher du financement pour en assurer la viabilité. Vous voulez faire preuve d'audace, de dynamisme et moderniser vos efforts? Je vous dis : investissez dans les programmes de prévention et de sensibilisation des CALACS.

Les campagnes de prévention et sensibilisation développées au niveau provincial sont de très bonnes initiatives sauf que, à notre avis, elles doivent être élevées à un niveau local. Ce que je veux dire par là, c'est qu'on a beau créer les plus belles et les plus percutantes campagnes, si on ne donne pas des ressources aux CALACS qui travaillent sur le terrain, on passe à côté de l'objectif.

Un exemple concret, la campagne Traçons-les-limites est une excellente campagne qui vise à engager l'entourage dans l'action. Les CALACS, on reçoit des centaines d'outils, mais on ne reçoit pas les ressources humaines pour en faire adéquatement la distribution, offrir des ateliers sur le terrain et engager la conversation avec les gens pour faire changer les attitudes.

Puis il est aussi temps pour un virage technologique afin de rejoindre plus de gens, particulièrement les jeunes. Les posters, ça ne donnent plus les mêmes résultats qu'il y a 20 ans. Il faut passer à autre chose. Il faut de l'interaction avec le public. Exemple : vous voyez un poster de la campagne « Don't drink and drive », versus vous participez à une discussion sur l'alcool au volant. D'après vous, qu'est-ce qui va donner le meilleur résultat au niveau du changement d'attitudes?

Je veux maintenant vous parler de l'importance et des droits des survivantes à l'accès à des services en français. Les gens qui s'engagent dans une cause le font parce qu'ils se reconnaissent, parce qu'ils peuvent faire des liens, mais ça aussi s'applique aux francophones. L'affaire Ghomeshi est un exemple. Très peu de francophones le connaissent. Pourquoi? Parce qu'il ne fait pas partie de notre quotidien. Par contre, parlez de Nathalie Simard aux francophones, et là vous allez avoir l'attention des francophones parce qu'elle fait partie du quotidien, et on peut faire des liens.

Le dernier plan d'action du gouvernement de l'Ontario ne comporte aucune clause concernant les services en français, contrairement au plan précédant, et ceci est très inquiétant. Les initiatives financées par le gouvernement doivent impliquer dès le départ la communauté

francophone afin d'en assurer le succès. Des initiatives développées par la majorité anglophone, ensuite traduites en français, ne répondent pas aux besoins et aux droits des francophones en Ontario. Nous l'avons déjà vécu trop souvent, malheureusement.

Encore trop de survivantes n'ont pas accès à des services en français, non pas parce qu'il n'en n'existe pas mais plutôt parce qu'elles ne sont pas toujours informées de leur existence et de leurs droits linguistiques. Le règlement des tierces parties de la Loi sur les services en français a permis d'améliorer, sur papier, la loi, mais dans l'application à tous les jours sur le terrain, la réalité est très différente.

Le gouvernement de l'Ontario doit maximiser les investissements, et pour ce faire, nous vous disons, ne réinventez pas la roue. Les CALACS ont été créés pour une raison et ont développé des expertises et des outils qui donnent des résultats. Depuis quelques années, nous sommes témoins de la multiplication de services, et cela nous inquiète. Malgré le nombre de services existant pour les victimes et qui sont supposément complémentaires les uns des autres, les CALACS ne reçoivent presque pas de références. Il y a définitivement un problème à ce niveau. Il faut apporter des changements pour que les victimes soient dirigées vers les services appropriés dans la langue de leur choix.

On a une solution. Ça s'appelle la collaboration : collaboration entre les ministères et collaboration entre les tierces parties de tous les secteurs, ce qui va permettre d'améliorer la communication et la prestation des services, et créer un continuum de services. Par exemple, le gouvernement désire créer un programme pilote pour offrir des conseils juridiques. Pour assurer le succès de cette initiative, il faut que le secteur juridique travaille avec des organismes terrains comme les CALACS, sinon on risque de reproduire ce qui existe actuellement : travail en silo, on ne rejoint pas la clientèle cible et le doublement de services.

Le nombre de victimes qui portent plainte étant minime, cette initiative doit avoir une composante pour rejoindre toutes les femmes qui ne dénoncent pas, et pour cela, le travail en collaboration avec les CALACS est essentiel.

Il faut aussi éviter de créer des structures complexes qui risquent d'ajouter des barrières à l'accès aux services.

The Chair (Ms. Daïene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

M^{me} Josée Guindon: All right. Oh, my God.

Nous souhaitons que le gouvernement prenne en considération tout le travail fait depuis 20 ans en Ontario par les CALACS, qui sont aux premières lignes et qui possèdent l'expertise nécessaire pour mettre fin aux agressions sexuelles en partenariat avec le gouvernement.

Dernier point important : j'ai besoin de souligner les conditions d'emploi des intervenantes des CALACS. Saviez-vous que les salaires des intervenantes qui travaillent dans des CALACS sont 26 % moins élevés que les salaires des intervenantes dans des emplois comparables dans d'autres secteurs, et que les intervenantes

n'ont pas accès aux fonds de pension? C'est prioritaire que le gouvernement se penche sur une stratégie pour éviter que les intervenantes, qui passent leur vie à lutter pour les droits des femmes et contre la pauvreté des femmes, ne se retrouvent pas elles-mêmes à vivre dans la pauvreté.

Trois mots pour terminer, trois mots qu'on entend beaucoup aux CALACS par les survivantes : croire, vouloir et pouvoir. Je souhaite que le gouvernement va croire aux CALACS, va croire aux services en français et va vouloir apporter des changements parce que c'est vous qui avez le pouvoir.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup. La première question est de MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to say thank you, and if you have more to say, go for it. You can take my time.

Ms. Josée Guindon: Well, you'll have the text—I'm going to send the text.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's fine. Thank you very much. It was great. I'm sorry; we tried—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any questions from MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: You hastily, at the very end of your presentation—can I speak in English?

Ms. Josée Guindon: Yes.

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Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. At the very end of your presentation, you mentioned "avoid creating complex structures that might in fact reinforce barriers or create new barriers." Were you thinking of something specific when you said that?

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Oui. Dans le plan d'action, il y a une mention à un moment donné concernant peut-être des—je n'ai pas la terminologie devant moi, mais les comités de coordination ou coordination de services et tout ça.

Les victimes d'agressions sexuelles sont déjà référées d'un service à un autre. Souvent, le point d'entrée—par exemple, elles vont arriver à un service qui offre des services en anglais, puis en suite, quelque temps plus tard, elles vont être référées à un service en français, puis en suite—c'est très difficile.

Donc, n'ajoutez pas d'autres services complexes, références et tout ça. Il existe des services qui sont vraiment outillés pour répondre aux besoins des femmes et ça ne sert à rien de réinventer toute une structure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. And our final question is from MPP Lalonde.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Bonjour. Rebonjour. Comment ça va?

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Ça va.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Très bonne présentation. Merci beaucoup. C'était très pertinent, très éducatif. Tantôt j'ai posé une question, mais je vais essayer de changer un petit peu. Tu nous disais qu'il y avait quand même des services qui étaient offerts mais que l'information souvent n'était pas là. Ça serait quoi ta recommandation? Comment peut-on les informer, les

gens à travers la province, des services en français qui sont offerts?

M^{me} Josée Guindon: C'est certain que l'application du règlement des tierces parties a besoin d'être vu à ce niveau-là. Ça va au-delà d'informer les gens qu'il existe des services en français. Ça va de l'obligation et de la responsabilité du gouvernement de s'assurer que les organismes qu'il finance et qui ont un mandat pour offrir des services en anglais, offrent des services en anglais et réfèrent automatiquement aux services qui sont désignés pour offrir des services en français.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Parfait. Merci beaucoup. Merci de ta présence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for your presentation to our committee today. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

DRAW THE LINE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter, Julie Lalonde, to come forward.

Good afternoon, Ms. Lalonde. You're going to be talking to us about Draw the Line and Hollaback! Ottawa?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. So you will have 15 minutes to speak about both organizations.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Perfect. I have material. Do I just leave them here for distribution after?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our Clerk is going to come and get them from you.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Wonderful. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): For the record, please begin by stating your name and the organizations you represent.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: My name is Julie Lalonde, and I'm the project manager of the Draw the Line campaign and the site director of Hollaback! Ottawa.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin anytime.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Wonderful. I'm going to speak about Draw the Line first, if that's okay.

I actually do public speaking for a living, and so this is generally not a stressful thing. But it's very ironic that I'm here today, because I've been doing nothing but press around workplace sexual harassment since this morning, because yesterday CBC broke the story of how I gave a presentation at RMC in the fall that went very, very badly and, as a result, after five months I finally got an apology letter from—I can't remember; Meinzinger is his last name.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The commandant.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes, the commandant of RMC. So it's very relevant for me to be here. Why I was at RMC was actually in my role with Draw the Line. What I do is, I travel across the province and I talk to everybody from very adorable, keen grade 6 students sitting cross-legged in the library, to folks working on Parliament Hill,

to campuses, to workplaces of every variety, talking about not only sexual violence but the role of bystanders.

What's exciting about Draw the Line is, as my colleagues at Action ontarienne and CALACS d'Ottawa have said, it's one of the only, if not the only provincial campaign that was developed in English and in French from the start. So the fact that myself and my colleagues at the CALACS across the province are giving the same content is remarkable.

As a Franco-Ontarian, I also appreciated that it's a campaign that's truly bilingual and not just a translation, which is great. But it's our approach, I think, that has gotten us the most success. What we hear from people is, "I had a total expectation of what I thought you were going to say, and that wasn't it at all. You're not here to tell me that all men are perpetrators or all women are going to be victimized. You're saying, 'I believe everyone is a good person who's going to see or hear things and they don't know what to do.'"

My message is: (1) We need to keep funding prevention. We treat sexual violence as inevitable in this country. Unequivocally, we treat it as inevitable and we need to change that, and part of that is investing in prevention. Yes, we need to give money to sexual assault support centres. We need to invest in people doing aftercare for trauma, but we also need to believe that sexual violence can be prevented.

I believe it, and I believe that when we frame it in that way, people are actually empowered to make a difference rather than feeling very discouraged, because I can tell you that after last fall, after everything that blew up—we all heard the stories, whether it was CBC, Parliament Hill, the military—people are bummed out. People are not feeling empowered to make a difference. People are saying, "Every time I turn around, I turn on the TV and some other area of my world is consumed by rape culture." That's not motivating people to get up in the morning and make a difference. It's making them feel like this is inevitable, that there's no point in even trying.

What is so important about Draw the Line and campaigns like it is that we give people tools. So yes, I'm going to start off by bumming you out by saying workplace sexual harassment is a thing that exists. That's the Debbie Downer part of the presentation, a little Negative Nancy. But then I follow it up with, "Here are four tangible things you can do, people to talk to, the sentence to say. What does it mean to support someone?" And it works. People love it.

I think my experience of presenting at RMC in the fall speaks to how important it is. I gave the exact same content there, with the exception of a scenario around alcohol-facilitated sexual assault, to grade 6 students, and those grade 6 students were more mature and responsive. When I'm speaking to a group of RMC students in first year and the first slide is "What is consent?" and half of the room bursts out laughing, we have a problem. We have a problem that needs to be addressed. For me, I think oftentimes we overestimate people's knowledge base, when we don't even have basic concepts of consent down pat.

I just want to leave you with one of the things that I found—and Josée Guindon spoke to this, really importantly—about our approach to talking about online sexual violence: We don't talk about how women should not be sending naked selfies. We talk about how this is not sexting; this is sexual violence. When we refer to it as sexting, we're giving a cutesy name to a form of sexual violence, and that's not acceptable.

But every single time I give that talk in high schools, I have at least two women come up to me afterwards to say, "Thank you for being here, because I haven't slept in a week, because I've been going back and forth as to whether or not I should send a photo to this guy who has been pressuring me to do so." So people don't understand what consent is, but they also don't understand what coercion is. If I ask people what consent is in a room, maybe half of them have an idea; I ask them what coercion is and I get blank stares. That is part of our conversations around consent.

I just want to encourage you to really think about the framing of the discussion. I cannot emphasize this enough. We are constantly making it seem like sexual violence is inevitable. I don't agree with that, and I do believe that that ethos is sort of framing our discussions about it: "It's going to happen, so when it does, know where your local sexual assault centre is." I don't think that's the right approach, and I think it's not resonating with people. As I said, the fact that their takeaway from last fall was "There is nothing I can do because everything is terrible" doesn't make people want to get involved and do something.

Campaigns like Draw the Line/Traçons-les-limites and things like it—I think we're on to something, and I want to see that continue. The number one thing I hear from people is, "I love your campaign. Why have I never heard about it before?" I think we have the power to change that, and I would like to see that.

Do we want to do questions for that now, or do you want me to put my other hat on?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): It's entirely up to you.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: What makes sense for everyone?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Why don't we ask questions on this, and then we'll go to the next topic?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Perfect.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to begin with our NDP caucus with MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Draw the Line is delivered only in educational institutions? You talked about grade 6 classes and also RMC. Is it targeted to students generally, or—

Ms. Julie Lalonde: No. I think what's really remarkable about Draw the Line—and, truthfully, I don't even think we knew that when we planned it; I like to pretend we did, but we didn't—is that by giving a variety of scenarios that fall along the sexual violence continuum, there are scenarios that are relevant for every age group and every demographic.

For example, one of the scenarios is—and I have examples of all of them here for everyone—your sister

tells you her husband made her have sex last night. Do you change the subject? It's a really important conversation we've had about disclosure. It's one thing to say that someone you know has been sexually assaulted and you put on your superhero cape, but what if the person who assaulted them is your brother-in-law? How do you challenge family violence?

The scenarios are very, very relevant for different groups, but we just go wherever we're invited. We just don't have the capacity to be knocking on all the doors that we want to be knocking on, to be in all the spaces where I think we need to be.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for the work you're doing, by the way. It's excellent.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you very much for the presentation. I think we need to hear from someone who has been dealing with our youth in our public system. As you know, the government is rolling out the physical health curriculum this fall. Much of what you just said supposedly will provide the tools for the teachers to go about this.

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In your thoughts, do you have any suggestions for us in terms of rolling out the curriculum, or some of the potential challenges or potential ways that we can roll it out so that we can really get to the youth and really get the message across? Any advice for us?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Certainly. I would say first of all that our biggest obstacle is connecting with EDU and making sure that this material is integrated into the content of the curriculum. What we're seeing with the curriculum is that the resources exist; there are just no connections being made and it's very siloed. We don't need to create new content. It's there. Every single sexual assault centre in the province has a public educator who is trained in delivering this content. You can have them come speak at your local school. Making that connection is really, really important.

But I would say that the biggest thing that needs to be put across to folks is that you need buy-in. When a teacher is delivering content that they're not really invested in, students get that, right? They know that. So we need the educators to believe in the content. I want every teacher who is telling a grade 7 student what consent is to believe that that's an important thing for them to learn.

Mr. Han Dong: I've just got a quick follow-up: In your experience of teaching kids and doing speeches and stuff, do you get support from the parents? What kind of feedback do you get from parents and teachers?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: I would say the biggest barrier to getting into schools is the fear that parents are going to call them. Yet what we tend to do is that I prefer to actually do presentations during the day with the students and in the evening with the parents. Once parents

actually see what we're doing, they're on board, but there is so much mythology around the content that people go into it resistant. Then they realize, "Oh. This makes perfect sense." We need more of that. We need to be engaging parents around this curriculum.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much, Julie. I was listening to your CBC interview on the way back from Kingston last night; I found it quite interesting.

I have two quick questions for you. One is on the funding for the program: Where are you receiving that from and how is that going? Also, just as a general question, in your experience, is it that there is more media and more attention to sexual violence and harassment, or is there just a greater frequency of it happening, or a combination of that? Just in your own experience, from all your travels and your discussions.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes, speaking to Monsieur et Madame Tout-le-monde across the province. One, I can say that we can now proudly say that we are funded by the province of Ontario, and we have been since the start. We were not able to say so until recently, but it was part of the 2010 sexual violence action plan, which is great. We are funded by the province, and we're hoping to see that funding continue. We're feeling positive about that.

Mr. Randy Hillier: And which ministry is it?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Ontario Women's Directorate, OWD. Part of one of the recommendations that was made by the sexual violence action plan was to develop a prevention campaign, so that's why the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes were engaged to do that work.

The second question is one that I get a lot, which is: "Are youth more corrupt today than they were back in the day?" I don't believe so. I believe we are finally shedding light in dark places and it's finally safe enough for people to come forward. Because the kinds of, quite frankly, garbage that we're seeing over the last couple of months—nothing is new. In fact, I would say that social media, as much as it can be a weapon used against youth and young women in particular, has also allowed us to tell stories that the mainstream media were not originally covering.

I think of Rehtaeh Parsons, for example. Social media was used to make her life miserable, but social media is the reason why we know her story and why we're now fighting for justice for Rehtaeh. So I think it sounds worse, but it's because we're hearing about things that were going on behind closed doors for decades.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you.

HOLLABACK! OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Julie Lalonde, we're going to have you switch hats now, and you will speak to us about Hollaback! Ottawa.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Thank you. One, I really love hearing people talk about Hollaback! Seeing middle-aged

men on TV say “Holler back Ottawa” makes me laugh every time. Hollaback! is an international movement. We are now in 92 cities and 32 countries around the world, in over a dozen different languages.

We were started in New York, around 2005. A young woman was taking the subway when a man started publicly masturbating in front of her. She was just fed up with it. At that time, cell phone cameras were brand new technology, so she took out her phone, took a very grainy photo of this person and showed it to the NYPD, and they said, “There are millions of people who live in New York. What do you want me to do with that?”

At the time—this was before Facebook and Twitter—she put it on Flickr, which is a social media photo-sharing site, and it went viral and ended up on the cover of tons of papers in New York. It really ignited a conversation about the prevalence of street harassment.

What’s important to know about street harassment is that it is probably the most pervasive form of gender-based violence, but it’s also the least legislated against. The vast majority of people have no idea what I’m talking about when I say “street harassment,” but when I say “catcalling” or when I go through the list of stories of what people have experienced, you can see this moment in their head of, “Wow, that is a form of violence.” It is so mundane. It is so status quo for women and LGBTQ folks to be walking down the street, particularly in the summer, and to have people yell things at them, to be groped on public transit. It’s just commonplace for people. In fact, some of the language is quite strong, but I do want to read directly from people’s testimonials.

We have a website, and part of the resources I have left here with you is some information about who we are but also what it looks like. In cities around the world, over 92 cities—which I think is absolutely astounding—people can submit their stories of street harassment.

For example: “I was walking down Rideau. This thing happened to me. I was angry. I was appalled.” You submit it through an app or through our website and a little dot goes on the map. So we’re actually tracking where street harassment happens, which is a great public policy tool. When we had an election last year, we approached everyone running in the different ridings to say, “Your riding has the highest level of street harassment in the city. What are you going to do about it?” So it gives us a tool in order to do that, but it’s also incredibly validating for someone who has experienced a form of harassment—which, overwhelmingly, is witnessed by other people who don’t do anything—to be able to go onto the site and say, “This happened to me,” and have other people go on board and click on it to say, “I’ve got your back. What happened to you is disgusting and we need to do something about it.”

Some of the examples here in my wonderful city of Ottawa: Jess’s story, saying, “Leaving work downtown at 11 p.m. and a car full of” men “literally BARKED at me, followed by yelling a slew of ‘hey baby’ and ‘where you going?’” Without even looking over I threw my middle finger in the air for nearly a block, which of course turned me from ‘baby’ into ‘bitch!’”

Yami, a woman, said, “I was waiting for the bus heading to Orléans and this man took it upon himself to grab my ass and call me a” N-bomb. “Nobody said anything” and “just watched.”

“I was riding my bicycle down MacArthur on Monday around noon when some guys yelled at me from their car as they passed me. The passenger leaned out, yelling, ‘Hey girl, come ride my cock like you ride that bike’ and ‘I’m gonna grab you off that bike and squeeze your tits’ then proceeded to speed off.”

Lastly, another story—and, I mean, you could go on our website and just read this all day long. This is what’s happening every single day in Ottawa. Allison’s story: “I was walking back to my office during lunch when I passed a young-ish guy who looked like he was rolling a joint or a cigarette.” I’m not sure. “We briefly made eye contact. When I looked away, he began to yell ‘How’s it going bitch? Bitch come here!’ I kept walking and didn’t look or say anything but he kept yelling stuff till I was gone. There were a lot of people around” and it was really humiliating.

What we know about street harassment—the biggest thing I hear is: “It’s a compliment. You should just take a compliment. You can’t take a compliment.” What we know about street harassment is that it might start off sounding like a compliment, but the second you don’t react in the way that they want you to—which, how am I supposed to know?—it very quickly turns hostile and it very quickly turns into what it really was, which was: “I’m trying to put you in your place. I’m trying to remind you that you are public property and you are walking down the street, so I can say whatever I would like to you.”

I’m talking about girls as young as 12 or 13 years old who have this happen to them. In many cases, the moment they start experiencing street harassment is the moment they believe that they are now a woman. I hear that from young women: “I know I look like a woman now because I get yelled at by cars when I go to school.” What does that say?

And so the reason why Hollaback! wanted to be here today is because we want people to recognize that street harassment is on the sexual violence continuum. We saw this with the infamous—and I don’t need to repeat it—disgusting things that have been yelled at female journalists over the past couple of months that is an online sensation. That’s street harassment. What’s been ironic for me is that the same people who tell me, “Why don’t you focus on real forms of violence?” are calling me to say how appalling that woman’s experience was. That’s street harassment. Because she was at work and because there was a microphone there, it’s somehow elevated, but if I’m just walking to go to the coffee shop and someone yells something at me, we should be equally as appalled.

What we know is that it’s not a criminal justice response that’s going to end street harassment; it’s a cultural shift. It’s talking to young boys and saying, “If you think this is how you impress other men”—we know

that it's typically groups of men who engage in this behaviour—"it doesn't work. You don't get dates from it. Women don't like it."

That's why we teach bystander intervention. We have a specific program where we talk about "direct, delegate, distract, delay," and we really challenge a lot of myths around bystander intervention, in which you think it's going to lead to escalation, it's going to lead to violence, but it's as simple as asking someone, "Hey, I need to get off the bus at Rideau. Do you know which stop that is?" You're interrupting a moment.

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So we need further education on bystander intervention. My hope today is that you begin to understand where street harassment fits on the sexual violence continuum and that someone yelling, "Hey, baby" at me and throwing things at me or groping me on the bus is directly connected to sexual violence in the way it's traditionally understood. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Hello. If you don't mind, I'm going to speak in English. Is that all right or—

M^{me} Julie Lalonde: Oui, oui, c'est correct.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for this wonderful presentation. Actually, that was great. We've heard in Toronto about—I think it was in Toronto—street harassment and some of the work, and I think they referred—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thunder Bay.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Pardon me?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thunder Bay.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thunder Bay—and she referred actually to this program. So that's great.

I want to broaden that and maybe touch on your perspective, and I wanted to ask you, in the very large term, what are the root causes of sexual violence and harassment among our young people?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Misogyny. If you were raised in a world in which women don't have the same value as you, they're disposable, they're objects or they are there to help you elevate your status, then that needs to change.

So when I'm working with youth and young men can proudly talk about how many photos of nude women they have on their phones, but every single one of those women is individually viewed as a slut, we're perpetuating the idea that women are a status symbol, and if they don't give you what you want, they're disposable. If we don't talk about sexual violence as a form of misogyny, and if we don't talk about it as gendered, that women and men are not implicated in the same way, we are not going to solve the problem.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: So when you talk about the prevention component, if you were to make recommendations, how do we start with prevention?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Prevention starts with having the conversations with kids in kindergarten about body parts. What we know about ending childhood sexual abuse is, if children have shame around their sexuality, they're not

going to speak out about what they're experiencing. So it starts that young. For me, it's about having concrete conversations about what prevention looks like. "If you see something, say something" doesn't compel people. "I don't know what I'm looking for, and I don't know who to talk to."

People do not know what sexual violence looks like. Everywhere I go, people think, "Oh, that's just a new term for 'rape.'" People know what rape looks like, and when they talk about bystander intervention, they imagine, "I'm going to see a woman being raped in the alley, and that's when I'm going to intervene." That's not what you're going to see. That's not what you're going to hear. You're going to hear allusions. You're going to see someone isolate someone else. Those are the kinds of things where we need to give people concrete tools, and it has to start early and it has to start often.

Nobody is too old either. Yes, it's not okay that we're waiting until people are in university, but we should still be having that conversation in university.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm just going to end by saying that this morning, when we started our day, we had this wonderful group called ManUp—

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Love them.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: I presented with Longfields-Davidson Heights. They give me so much hope. I swear to you, on bad days I wake up in the morning and I'm like, "Okay, ManUp exists. It's worthwhile for me to get up." I presented Draw the Line to them and it brought me to tears how they engaged with the material, in a very realistic way. They're phenomenal.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Merci.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Amazing presentations—both of them were fabulous.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Thank you.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I was going to ask—and it may be partially answered. So ManUp did it themselves. Are you able to get into schools? When you go to the schools, do you talk about Hollaback! in a way that you can—

Ms. Julie Lalonde: We try to.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —age appropriate?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes, yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. The girl from Thunder Bay—she was a student who did a presentation. It was fabulous. We all, as women, have experienced—I mean, we can all tell a hundred stories each.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It goes on and on. So it is cultural.

When we saw the reporter last week or the week before now, Shauna Hunt, were more bystanders who were encouraging those guys yelling at her. Despite the fact that it was this phenomenon that had been going on, which I wasn't aware of, but we just actually saw—can you just comment on what the heck went on besides they were drinking at a soccer game?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: We see it, though. I think the biggest thing about street harassment, if you've never experienced it—which, bless your heart; please, I would love to be in your shoes—all of the attention is put on you. I can speak of my own experience. I was physically and sexually assaulted on public transit here in Ottawa, at 8 a.m., a totally quiet bus, packed. Everybody stared at me. Everybody was just staring at me, aghast as to what happened. No one came to my help. Everybody just stared at me.

When you teach women to be polite, no matter what, and that the second you stand up for yourself you're a bitch or you think you're better than everybody else, then we're also encouraging women not to speak out. In that moment, the second I defended myself, it was like, "Whoa, lady, you're making a mountain out of a molehill," right? We saw that when that woman defended herself. It was like, "This isn't about you." He was indignant with her because she challenged him.

That's the bystander effect. We live in a culture in which, when we talk about bystander intervention, people say that we don't have each other's backs. No, we do. We just defend the wrong people all the time, and we need to change that.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for coming to talk to this committee. Cultural shifts are hard to make. This program you mentioned, Hollaback!, is in 92 cities around the world. Is there any kind of research or data about the impact of Hollaback! in moving the culture and achieving this kind of cultural shift?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Well, here in Ottawa, for example, we have zero funding, so we are a volunteer-run organization, but the Hollaback! movement as a whole—what they have been able to do is to get some pro bono research looking at how as a survivor, when you tell your story, it does actually have an impact in reframing your experience. For a long time, you believed that it was your fault or that you were being dramatic, but by telling your story, you actually begin to reframe it and you become politicized. You realize that your story is everyone's story and that it was not acceptable what happened to you.

Bystander intervention campaigns—our campaign specifically comes from Green Dot, which is out of the United States. You can look it up. It's one of the best, most highly awarded bystander intervention campaigns in existence. But equally importantly for me, I want women to not feel crazy when they're upset by street harassment. We have been able to show that Hollaback! does that, and I think that's tremendous.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Great. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Julie Lalonde, thank you so much for coming and making your presentations here to our committee. It's very informative. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

CENTRE DES RESSOURCES DE L'EST D'OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call up our next presenter, Danielle. Danielle, I will spare you the discomfort of having to hear me try to pronounce your surname. I'll let you do it when you come up to the front. Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. If you'd like some water, just pour some for yourself. You will have 15 minutes to present to our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. Can you please begin by stating your name and the name of your organization?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Danielle Pécore-Ugorji, intervenante en appui transitoire pour le Centre des ressources de l'est d'Ottawa et le bureau satellite de Pembroke dans le comté de Renfrew.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Commencez.

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Bon après-midi. J'ai une deuxième copie de ce que je vais dire cet après-midi, s'il y a quelqu'un qui prend des notes ou pour la traduction, qui en aurait besoin, mais je ne vous ai pas amené des copies parce que je voudrais que vous m'écoutez au lieu de lire ce que j'ai écrit.

Merci de m'accueillir au comité cet après-midi. Je pense que c'est important que vous entendez des voix des communautés minoritaires et des communautés rurales, malgré que vous ne veniez pas chez nous.

Comme je vous ai dit, je travaille depuis environ cinq ans avec les survivantes d'agressions sexuelles dans le comté de Renfrew, à la fois dans mon poste actuel en tant qu'intervenante en appui transitoire pour le CREO, mais aussi en tant que bénévole active du Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions sexuelles du Comté de Renfrew et membre active, encore, de plusieurs associations francophones dans le comté, dont la Fédération des femmes canadiennes-françaises.

Je suis originaire de Pembroke. C'est un lieu que je connais très bien. Comme la majorité des gens de chez nous, surtout des francophones, j'ai quitté la région pour poursuivre mes études postsecondaires. Je suis revenue dans la région seulement après avoir complété mes études et commencé une carrière.

J'ai travaillé avec des populations vulnérables partout dans le monde, surtout en Asie et en Afrique, et je vous dis aujourd'hui que j'ai vu des camps de réfugiés où les survivantes ont un meilleur accès aux services que les survivantes francophones d'agressions sexuelles dans le comté de Renfrew.

Comme beaucoup de femmes, j'ai connu le harcèlement sexuel en milieu de travail et dans les rues, ce que Julie Lalonde vient de nous décrire mieux que je ne le pourrais. Mais c'est vraiment au nom et en l'honneur de deux amies que je suis ici aujourd'hui. Elles m'ont vraiment motivé dans mon travail—deux amies qui m'ont dévoilé à l'adolescence deux expériences d'agressions sexuelles. Elles n'ont jamais reçu les services dont elles avaient besoin. Donc, je poursuis ce travail en honneur d'elles.

Je pense que vous avez entendu ce matin deux de mes collègues du comté de Renfrew : Bev Ritza, du centre d'aide et de lutte contre l'agression sexuelle; et aussi Jen Valiquette, du « regional assault care program ». Donc, vous connaissez déjà les caractéristiques clés de la région du comté de Renfrew. Mais j'imagine que vous avez aussi entendu plusieurs voix depuis elles, donc je vais vous rappeler un peu d'où je viens et les caractéristiques du comté de Renfrew.

Vous savez déjà que nous sommes une région très grande, très rurale et avec une population très éparpillée. Vous savez que nous n'avons aucun transport en commun. Vous savez aussi que nous avons une grande base militaire à Petawawa et une communauté d'Algonquins à Pikwàkanagàn. Nous avons été touchés par la violence sexuelle au sein de l'Église catholique. Notre population vieillit et en général se rattache aux traditions et aux valeurs religieuses. Nous avons notre part de mythes par rapport à l'agression sexuelle, ce qui rend difficile la vie des victimes d'agressions sexuelles. Celles qui osent s'avancer ne sont pas crues ou se font très souvent blâmer pour ce qui est arrivé.

Je vais vous parler maintenant un peu des communautés francophones dans le comté de Renfrew. Je dis bien « des communautés », au pluriel, parce que nous avons quand même une diversité. Il y a environ 5 000 francophones dans le comté de Renfrew. Ce sont les dernières statistiques. Par contre, ces statistiques excluent les familles militaires qui habitent sur la base de Petawawa. Il est difficile d'estimer le nombre de familles francophones sur la base parce que, d'abord, la base ne garde pas ces statistiques-là, ou ne les partage pas en tout cas, mais aussi parce que ça varie.

Vous savez aussi que la Loi sur les services en français de 1986 donne le droit au grand public de recevoir des services en français de la part des ministères et des organismes du gouvernement de l'Ontario situés dans trois régions désignées du comté de Renfrew, donc la ville de Pembroke; les cantons de Stafford, qui font maintenant partie de Laurentian Valley, qui est vraiment collée sur Pembroke; et les cantons de Westmeath-La Passe.

Je parle bien de communautés francophones au pluriel parce que la communauté francophone ne forme pas une seule communauté homogène. Les francophones de la base militaire ont des besoins différents que les francophones qui habitent en région rurale à l'ouest du comté, par exemple. Les francophones qui habitent la ville de Pembroke n'ont pas les mêmes défis que les francophones, par exemple, à Combermere, Killaloe ou Barry's Bay. Il n'est pas rare non plus que les francophones du côté du Québec, dans le coin de Chapeau, viennent chercher des services ou socialiser dans le coin de Pembroke. Nos enfants vont à l'école ensemble, etc. Donc, il y a un manque de services du côté du Québec, et ces gens-là viennent chercher des services en français dans la région de Pembroke.

Les survivantes francophones—Bev vous a parlé par rapport au projet de recherche financé par Condition

féminine Canada et des expériences particulières des femmes rurales. Ce projet a également consulté, évidemment, des francophones dans le comté de Renfrew, donc ces informations s'appliquent également aux communautés francophones du comté.

Mes collègues vous ont parlé des défis des survivantes dans le comté de Renfrew : les services peu nombreux; la mentalité conservatrice, surtout par rapport aux rôles stéréotypés des hommes et des femmes; les grandes distances à parcourir pour avoir accès aux services; les préoccupations par rapport à la confidentialité; la pauvreté très répandue; la présence d'armes à feu, pour la chasse, par exemple; le nombre restreint d'emplois, surtout des emplois bien rémunérés; l'isolation extrême des minorités culturelles, raciales et religieuses; et l'oppression continue des membres de nos Premières Nations. Certains de ces défis sont multipliés pour les victimes francophones d'agressions sexuelles.

La confidentialité : les communautés francophones sont petites. Les gens se connaissent très bien, souvent depuis toute leur vie, et sont souvent liés de parenté entre eux. Les membres de la communauté francophone militaire apprennent souvent à se connaître très rapidement et se voient très souvent en raison de l'isolation des francophones militaires, surtout ceux qui ne parlent pas très bien l'anglais. Comme elles n'ont généralement pas beaucoup de famille dans le coin, elles dépendent de leurs consœurs francophones pour un appui émotionnel et pratique.

Les francophones de la région de Pembroke se voient régulièrement, socialisent, éduquent leurs enfants, travaillent, fréquentent la même église et font leurs achats ensemble à la même épicerie où elles savent qu'elles peuvent recevoir des services en français.

Donc, lorsqu'une survivante et un agresseur viennent tous les deux de la même communauté francophone, ils se côtoient régulièrement et peuvent rarement s'éviter. Cette réalité multiplie généralement l'inconfort de la survivante, surtout dans une communauté qui jase beaucoup, mais aussi rend impossible certains aspects de la vie quotidienne. Par exemple, j'ai connu une survivante qui n'a pas pu retourner au travail car la seule place disponible dans une garderie francophone pour son enfant qui convenait à ses besoins était chez un membre de la famille de son agresseur.

La confidentialité au niveau de l'accès aux services peut également être compromise dans une communauté où tout le monde se connaît. Dans une communauté où l'avocat francophone est marié à l'agent de probation qui offre des services en français, où le policier est le beau-père de l'accusé, où l'enseignante de son fils est la meilleure amie de la travailleuse sociale, les survivantes n'ont jamais tout à fait confiance dans la confidentialité de leurs propos. Celles qui assurent réellement la confidentialité doivent redoubler leurs efforts et rassurer leur clientèle, vraiment, à chaque rencontre.

Il y a aussi peu d'opportunités d'emplois en français, ce qui veut dire que la plupart des francophones travaillent aux mêmes endroits, surtout celles qui

travaillent, par exemple, pour la base militaire ou pour les deux seules écoles francophones. Il est souvent impossible pour une survivante de changer de lieu de travail pour éviter son agresseur ou les membres de la famille de l'agresseur. En cas de harcèlement sexuel en milieu de travail, ça veut souvent dire que la survivante doit choisir entre gagner sa vie et éviter le harcèlement et la revictimisation.

Si la survivante travaille pour une des écoles francophones ou pour le militaire, elle risque de ne pas pouvoir s'échapper ni de son agresseur ni des jugements de ses collègues, qui apprendront sans doute tous les détails de la situation. Si la survivante travaille dans une entreprise où elle dessert le public, les clients qu'elle dessert risquent d'entendre ce qui s'est passé et de lui en parler, de l'intimider ou de la revictimiser. Par exemple, une survivante serveuse dans un restaurant a connu une augmentation de harcèlement sexuel de la part de ses clients suite à la publication dans le journal local des détails d'un procès. Comme elle avait déjà changé d'emploi pour éviter un patron qui la harcelait, elle n'avait plus vraiment d'autres options. Donc elle se trouvait contrainte à tolérer le harcèlement sexuel dans son milieu de travail, faute d'autres opportunités.

L'intersection de la pauvreté et de l'oppression : pour une minorité privilégiée dans le comté de Renfrew, la réponse au manque de services en français est le déplacement en ville, soit à Ottawa à l'est ou à North Bay à l'ouest, donc à environ 150 à 200 kilomètres de chez elles. Anglophones et francophones, nous avons un peu pris l'habitude de devoir nous déplacer, que ce soit pour des rendez-vous médicaux chez CHEO, chez un spécialiste quelconque ou pour acheter de l'équipement médical. Par exemple, il est impossible d'obtenir un avortement dans le comté de Renfrew. Donc, on s'entend qu'on a l'habitude de se déplacer pour des services quand même de base.

Certains n'osent même plus demander des services en français car leur expérience leur démontre qu'ils auront à attendre plus longtemps pour un service médiocre par une employée qui travaille normalement dans un autre département et qui se débrouille à peine en français, ou ils auront affaire à une employée anglophone hostile, qui leur en veut de demander le privilège—puis on s'entend que c'est un droit et non un privilège—de recevoir des services en français. Finalement, se déplacer peut éviter pleins de tracas.

Par contre, un très grand nombre de femmes survivantes de violence sexuelle ne peuvent se permettre de se déplacer pour recevoir des services en français, d'abord parce que les femmes gagnent normalement moins d'argent que les hommes, ont plus souvent des responsabilités parentales qui rendent les absences dispendieuses et difficiles, mais aussi parce que l'impact de l'agression sexuelle peut rendre plus vulnérables les femmes, soit économiquement ou socialement. Si une femme doit changer d'emploi ou laisser un emploi pour éviter le harcèlement sexuel, si elle quitte son partenaire en raison d'agressions sexuelles envers elle ou envers ses

enfants, si elle doit déménager pour éviter tout contact avec son agresseur, elle risque d'avoir moins de temps et moins d'argent pour veiller à ses propres besoins. Donc le découragement vécu au quotidien, les séquelles de l'assimilation et le jugement des gens peuvent aussi lui faire croire qu'elle ne mérite pas un service adéquat dans sa langue.

Jusqu'à maintenant, les services offerts aux survivantes francophones d'agressions sexuelles ont été offerts soit par des agences basées dans la région d'Ottawa en personne, par exemple le bureau satellite du CREO, à Pembroke, ou virtuellement au téléphone surtout, ou par des agences du comté qui trouvent les moyens d'offrir un service à temps partiel, souvent financé par des levées de fonds, donc c'est des postes instables à court terme. Souvent les agences de la région d'Ottawa ont dû faire exception à leurs politiques afin de desservir des clientes dans le comté de Renfrew qui ne pouvaient pas se déplacer. Autre que l'intervenante en appui transitoire du CREO, donc moi-même, il n'y a aucune présence régulière d'une intervenante francophone dans le comté de Renfrew en violence faite aux femmes, encore moins spécialisée en agression sexuelle, et mon poste est maintenant à temps partiel.

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Être la seule intervenante francophone autour de la table rend également très difficile la collaboration. Malgré les bonnes intentions des intervenantes anglophones extraordinaires autour de la table, c'est épuisant d'être la seule à rappeler chaque fois l'absence de francophones dans un processus, le besoin de fournir des informations dans les deux langues et la nécessité de consulter les membres de la communauté francophone. Évidemment toutes les rencontres sont en anglais et si quelque chose doit être traduit, ça revient à moi. Malgré une participation maximale, compte tenu des heures de travail restreintes, les efforts ne portent pas toujours des fruits. Par exemple, le protocole de violence sexuelle du comté n'a jamais été traduit en français et aucun francophone ne fait partie de sa gestion—le protocole qui gère tout le comté.

Donc j'ai maintenant des besoins et des recommandations que je vous amène aujourd'hui. D'abord, nous avons besoin d'une offre active de services en français bien connus de la population par des intervenantes compétentes qui travaillent à temps plein, le par et pour les femmes francophones, comme le demande toujours Action ontarienne.

Un financement adéquat afin de permettre l'annonce des services et le transport aux quatre coins éloignés du comté, une éducation du public pour changer les mentalités, et les fonds pour se déplacer pour servir chaque cliente, peu importe son lieu de résidence.

Une variété de services en français pour qu'une femme puisse choisir une intervenante qu'elle ne connaît pas personnellement ou qui ne connaît pas son agresseur ou sa famille, si elle le désire. Par exemple, dans les cinq ans que je rencontre des survivantes francophones dans le comté de Renfrew, je peux compter sur une main le nombre de femmes que je ne connaissais pas déjà ou le

nombre de situations où je ne connaissais pas déjà l'agresseur ou les membres de sa famille.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Parfait.

Les survivantes ont besoin d'avoir accès gratuitement à un service de counseling à long terme spécialisé en agressions sexuelles. Présentement aucun service de counseling à long terme spécialisé est offert par le comté, et les femmes n'ont pas toujours les moyens, soit de payer, même si les services étaient disponibles, ou de se déplacer.

Elles ont finalement besoin d'un accès assuré aux services de justice en français, avec de l'aide juridique gratuite ou à peu de frais en français. Nous avons tout besoin d'un système de justice qui tient les agresseurs sexuels responsables de leurs actes sans revictimiser les survivantes.

Merci de votre temps.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. May we question in English, or would you prefer French?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Je préfère que vous posiez des questions en français, mais en anglais, ça va. Je suis parfaitement bilingue.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Alors, la première question est de John Yakabuski.

Would you like someone to translate for you, John?

Mr. John Yakabuski: That's fine, because I won't be able to converse in French. Sorry.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay, Marie-France, would you ask the question for us if John lets you know?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I am completely bilingual, and I can answer your question.

Mr. John Yakabuski: So is English okay for you?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Absolutely, John.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh, we can ask in English. Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. John Yakabuski: That is the crux of your presentation, Danielle, and thank you very much for joining us. Unfortunately, Jennifer was unable to be here today; she was unable to make it. We were advised that she was not feeling well.

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Well, it's a fantastic program that she runs, so please look into it.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, Ms. Ritza mentioned to us that she was not feeling well.

Anyway, you covered a lot of stuff, and I'm glad my box here worked pretty well, because it hasn't been working that well today. But it worked well for your presentation. I'm thankful for that. You covered a lot of stuff about basic French-language services, which clearly you feel are lacking in Renfrew county.

But let's concentrate on the part that this committee is tasked with, on the issues of sexual violence and harassment. One of the things you talked about was the inability, or the unwillingness maybe, for people to come forward because of the fact that the communities are so small, and everyone knows each other. If you're a victim,

the fact that you've come forward could offend somebody who was friends with the perpetrator etc., which makes it a huge challenge for them to come forward because they fear ostracization within their own families or communities.

How would you advise us to attack that or try to break that barrier down? To be fair, that's not just an issue in the francophone community; it's an issue for us in all communities but particularly in rural communities because, like you say, everyone knows each other. So if something has happened within one group, one family, what do we need to take back as a recommendation to help break down that barrier?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I just want to highlight, like I said in my presentation, that it may happen in other communities and it may happen in the anglophone communities, but the impact on the survivor is multiplied in the francophone community when she literally has to see her aggressor or members of his family every day for various basic services that she cannot avoid. The impact is greater in the francophone community.

I think one of the first things that we need to do is to have an engagement, the kinds of programs that Julie was talking about. When people are talking about sexual violence, they're talking about how it's not okay; they're talking about what to do when someone comes forward. Just having those conversations happening in the community, especially in the community in French, even if a survivor never comes forward and never says anything, she's receiving support from the community because she's hearing people tell her indirectly that it's not okay what happened to you and we would believe you if you did want to say anything.

I think women always have to have the absolute choice on whether or not to come forward. Unfortunately, our research shows in Renfrew county that family members and friends of victims are often those who make the decision on whether or not she comes forward, and that's unacceptable. Making sure that we respect women's choices and making sure that we give her the multitude of choices—maybe she doesn't feel comfortable asking for service in French because she knows people. Maybe she'd rather get service in English; let her. Maybe she'd rather leave the county, if she can. Maybe we can support women, who otherwise financially couldn't, to get service that is actually anonymous and she feels comfortable sharing her story.

I think, second of all, breaking the isolation, giving women more opportunities to talk about these subjects and to talk about them openly and honestly, is really important. The work that the women's sexual assault centre in Renfrew county does is really key in terms of reaching women and creating safe spaces for women to talk about these issues.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP McMahon.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Merci beaucoup. J'allais poser la même question en fin de compte, par rapport à la confidentialité. Moi, j'ai vécu à Eganville. Alors, je connais le coin.

Interjection.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Ça va?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): No, continue.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Excusez-moi.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm having a brain fade. It's been a long day.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Il y a plein de choses qui se passent en même temps.

J'ai vécu à Eganville, ce qui fait que je connais le coin. Je comprends les besoins, en tout cas, dans la région. Ma question c'est : quels sont les besoins au niveau des services nécessaires pour les Franco-Ontariennes, pensez-vous?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Bien, les services, c'est vraiment tout. Il n'y a aucun service d'hébergement qui offre des services en français. Il n'y a aucun service de counseling à long terme, que ce soit pour les femmes survivantes de violence, point final, ou les survivantes d'agressions sexuelles. Il y a très peu pour les femmes qui cherchent à se rééduquer pour changer d'emploi. Les francophones du comté de Renfrew doivent quitter pour survivre en français. Donc il y a eu des améliorations au niveau des services de santé, par exemple, dans peut-être la dernière décennie, mais les services sociaux en français n'existent que très peu. Les services directs pour les femmes survivantes existent très peu. Donc, vraiment, si j'avais à choisir deux services prioritaires, pour moi, ce serait les services de counseling à long terme spécialisés en agression sexuelle et l'appui ou les informations juridiques en français à la fois au criminel et au familial.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Oui, une question?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: J'ai une question. Merci de votre présentation. Combien de femmes franco-ontariennes rejoignez-vous par année en ce moment?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Au niveau de services directs ou au niveau de présentations?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Oui, excusez, de services directs.

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Évidemment, comme je suis la seule personne dans le bureau, j'offre un éventail de services. Donc, une présentation dans une école, ça peut aussi être une intervention directe. Une présentation pour un groupe de femmes, c'est aussi un service direct, mais je rencontre aussi des femmes une à une. Donc c'est—

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: On parle de combien, environ, par année, de femmes—

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Si on inclut les un-à-un seulement?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Oui.

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Je dirais une vingtaine de différentes femmes.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: OK. Merci beaucoup.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And last, but not least, I apologize, MPP Sattler, for unfortunately skipping over you. We'll give you an extra minute. How's that?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for the presentation, and apologies for not being able to ask this question in French.

You mentioned at the beginning about serving 5,000 francophones in Renfrew county and an unknown number of French-speaking military families who reside on the base. That got me wondering about what happens when there is sexual assault on a military base, because all of the issues around confidentiality are magnified in a very small community like that. Do many women from military families end up seeking support and services from the surrounding community, and do you have a relationship with any services that are available on the base for these women?

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Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I just want to correct you and say that I don't pretend to serve all of the 5,000 francophones in Renfrew county, but there are approximately 5,000 francophones in Renfrew county, in addition to the women on the military base.

So what happens when a woman on the military base is sexually assaulted? Generally, very little is known about it in the community. There is an effort to, my understanding is—my father served in the military, so I do have a significant understanding of what happens on the military base. But generally, women try not to allow that to be known in the community.

That being said, the services that are offered outside of the military base are becoming better known, I would say, on the military base, so both the women's sexual assault centre and the service that I offer with CREO. So approximately half of the women I've seen one to one in the last year have been from the military community.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Really?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I think it's changing a little bit, but I think there's a significant fear of women to hurt their husbands' careers, damage their reputations, damage the reputation of the military. There's a lot of really significant concerns around that when something does happen, and there's a very strong message that they receive from the military community that they need to not share that publicly. So there really is a silencing of women, I would say, very strongly on the military base, but I think that that's changing.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Even more so than in the other community.

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I have very good relationships, for example, with the PMFRC. The PMFRC, the Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre, they don't offer necessarily direct services to women, but they are very good at referring women who do come forward.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Merci beaucoup for coming here today and appearing before our committee and sharing your infor-

mation with us. We invite you now to join our audience, if you wish to.

CRIME PREVENTION OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters to come forward, with Crime Prevention Ottawa.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: So we asked your Clerk—it's Friday afternoon. This is hard, hard material to talk about. Do you want to stand up and stretch, because you kind of look tired?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's a great invitation to do so. Let's do that.

I had one presenter at the end of the day who said, "I know I'm the only thing standing between you and your dinner, but we've got a few more to go."

Ladies, thank you very—

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: We know.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and appearing before this committee. Please begin by stating your names and the name of your organization for the record.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: I'm Nancy Worsfold, executive director, Crime Prevention Ottawa.

Ms. Lucia Spencer: And my name is Lucia Spencer. I'm a board member of Crime Prevention Ottawa and also the executive director of Immigrant Women Services Ottawa.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Thank you so much for having us. To explain who we are, Crime Prevention Ottawa is a local board of our municipality. So we're a quasi-independent municipal board and we have three priorities: youth, neighbourhoods, and violence against women. Within that, our mission is to contribute to crime reduction and enhance community safety through evidence-based crime prevention.

The three main points that we want to make this afternoon reflect our mission, especially the questions of collaboration and an evidence-based approach.

Our role is to build capacity, and we've worked very deliberately with our community here in Ottawa to build a prevention culture within the violence-against-women agencies here in Ottawa. While we recognize the incredible importance of victim services, our comments this afternoon will be exclusively with regard to prevention, so stopping things before they happen.

Our role in the city is, we do events, research and publications. I've got a big stack here of our research. We've addressed issues of alcohol and sexual violence, social media and sexual violence, and safety and the sex trade. We'll leave the stuff with you, but we've tried to look at the issues which are affecting our community and the issues that are emerging in our community. We know that the local agencies have been using our material extensively and we've engaged with our partners to do so.

We are also a funder. I heard earlier that you had heard from the ManUp kids—a wonderful group. That's

one of the projects we fund. We've invested, since 2007, approximately \$620,000 on violence-against-women projects.

I just want to bring to your attention, because they're very much within the provincial realm, that over the years we have spent \$152,000 on engaging the school boards in delivering the Fourth R program. Have you heard about the Fourth R program? Yes? No?

The Fourth R program is one of the few evidence-based programs with regard to the prevention of violence against women. It's a curriculum-based program to be delivered in grades 7, 8 and 9. It's literally dozens of lesson plans for teachers to deliver in the classroom focused on the triad of risk factors being sexuality, personal relationships and substance abuse, because so often these issues occur at the confluence of those three.

It's an active curriculum based on role playing and focused on the development of healthy relationship skills, particularly in our higher-risk kids. They don't necessarily know what a healthy relationship looks like if they're not seeing that modelled at home; they're certainly not seeing that modelled in the media. We're very proud of that, but it's very much that we're spending money in your schools.

In addition, we have invested over the years \$149,000 on the Neighbours, Friends and Families program, which was a provincially based program, which I hope you've heard about because it came from the province. Yes? No?

Neighbours, Friends and Families was provincially funded. The province developed a bunch of materials to increase the engagement of neighbours, friends and families in engaging—

Interjection.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Yes.

Ms. Marie-France Lalonde: The yellow signs everywhere around the city, right? You're talking about friendly-neighbourhood-type things?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: No.

Ms. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay. No, I don't know. I don't know your program.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: No, it's not our program. We funded local delivery of a provincial program that you haven't heard of. That's a worry.

Ms. Marie-France Lalonde: Maybe talk about it.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: No. I'm going to talk about what we—

Interjection.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: But I would encourage you to look at what the OWD has already done on prevention.

We've also funded various other campaigns: Don't Be That Guy. I don't know if you're interested. A lot of them are about sexual assault. These were—

Interjection.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Yes. The actual art for Don't Be That Guy was developed by the Edmonton police and they've allowed us and many others to deliver the program. We had them on all OC Transpo buses twice. We've also had partnerships particularly with the enter-

tainment district in Ottawa; it's called the Market. We had a partnership with the Market BIA.

We've really tried hard to get our messages out there, but our three key messages for you guys this afternoon are: Include a wide range of partners; focus on the evidence in terms of prevention; and be ready for long-term commitments.

I'm going to hand it over to Lucia.

Ms. Lucia Spencer: And I'll focus on the first point: Include a wide range of partners for effective prevention. Many of the presenters, I believe, who will be presenting to you will talk from the service perspective but we are looking at attacking the issue before it actually happens. Nancy has already communicated quite a bit to you about the work that has been done by CPO to date.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment is not a women's issue. Neither is it confined to one or two communities. It's all communities that are affected. The previous speaker spoke about the francophone community or the French-speaking community and the difficulties they have encountered as a result of people coming forward to talk about sexual violence. Many of our communities, including the immigrant community, have the same experience. Therefore, that's why it's important that through this process you speak to all communities, because all communities are affected in one way or the other.

It's also important to reach the broadest audience possible and to engage them in the discussion on this particular issue. I don't have to tell you what the statistics are saying outside there about people coming forward to talk about this particular issue. Therefore, opportunities like the one we have right now allow people to come forward. It may not be a victim, but at least somebody who knows about the victim will be able to come forward and talk about the issues as they see them in that particular community.

1520

We also need to keep the discussion at all levels, not just at the community level. We also need to engage faith groups, sports teams, homework clubs and everywhere else we know where we need to talk to folks. It's important to do so.

Nancy spoke a minute ago about the Fourth R and what is happening within the schools, engaging young people in the schools to discuss this particular issue. Speak with schools; speak with teachers; speak with educators out there. Find out what is happening in the respective schools and do something before the situation escalates.

The provincial government: We have to look to it for ideas and opportunities. When we look at what your work involves at the community level, you regulate liquor, security guards, police etc. Think about all of these other individuals outside there who we can get to or speak to in the area of building partnerships, and at the same time making sure that we address the issue, again, before it happens.

There are dozens—I'm not reading everything because you do have the documentation. There are dozens of

opportunities within your control and we encourage you to use these opportunities so you can get a broad-based level of information.

Finally, and perhaps most important for us, is for you to engage with your municipal partners. CPO is connected with the local municipality, and we are very much involved in the work that we are doing there in addressing this issue from a preventive point of view. So connect with other municipalities across Ontario. Find out what they're doing and see what we can do to help to address this issue. These issues play out in our cities. Our police serve these clients; our bylaw officers monitor the bars; our financial assistance offices and housing offices work with victims every day. We know this is a real issue in our society. It's no longer a hidden issue. We need to address it at all levels of government.

As I said earlier, it is not a women's issue. That's why I'm very pleased to see the number of men who are sitting in the room this afternoon as you listen, because it's only when all of us are working together that we can achieve success.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Thank you, Lucia.

I'd encourage you to look at the evidence, particularly with regards to prevention. There are way too many things that have been done in the name of preventing crime that simply don't work. I'd hearken back to the most famous example of the Just Say No campaigns, which, when they were evaluated, at best did nothing, and at worst actually encouraged experimentation with drugs. Evaluation is really important and looking honestly at what we do is really important.

I've been very impressed, we've all been very impressed, with your current TV ads. I love them. The best thing about them is the simplicity; it's not complicated. The message is clear and anybody can see their role in ending sexual violence. And it's understandable, but good ads only matter if they produce behaviour change. We all need to measure that.

We know that our work has changed some behaviour. We strive to base our work on the known evidence and to evaluate as much as feasible. With some of our projects we have detailed evaluations, such as the community-based project of the Fourth R program. We can demonstrate behaviour change in the young people who are engaged.

It's much harder with the big public campaigns to do that. We know, anecdotally, that the Don't Be That Guy campaign generated a discussion and was noticed. We know, anecdotally, that the ManUp project at Longfields-Davidson has affected their school climate significantly. But anecdotal evidence is not ideal. It's a start; it's not ideal. But you have the means to measure public attitudes on this kind of campaigning. I really encourage you to look at doing that. We don't really have the means for that kind of evaluation, but you do. Please consider it.

We would encourage you to consider working with academics and evaluation experts. At the Crime Prevention Ottawa level, we have numerous academics who sit on our committees with us and work with us. It's a very

fruitful partnership. I'm sure, at the provincial level, you could do the same.

We'd like to suggest that you consider the long term when you're looking at sexual violence. Sexual violence is a complicated issue; it's not going away quickly. It's been with us as long as anybody can remember. We need to be realistic with the programs and the investments that we make.

The Fourth R, which I described earlier, the curriculum-based program, is not a workshop that lasts for one school period. It's dozens of lesson plans over three years. It's meaningful engagement with a young person to help them develop healthy relationship skills.

Changing people's behaviour, changing people's lives—it's not as simple as a TV ad. A TV ad is very important because it changes the mood, it creates an opportunity for discussion. But if you want to change behaviours long term, you need multiple levels of intervention and prevention. We need a range of these approaches.

You have at the province so many of the big publicly funded services that you can look at where you can engage. You can engage with the school system, but you can engage with family doctors. You can engage with recreation programs. I'd encourage you to consider particularly vulnerable populations such as the homeless, foster children aging out of care, offenders, disabled people. There are particularly vulnerable populations for which you fund extensive amounts of services. You've got lots of opportunities within the provincial government to look at.

We can make a difference. We encourage you to measure it. But I want to warn you, if you do your job really well, sometimes the result doesn't look that good at first, because increased awareness and improved response may lead to increased reporting of sexual violence. You've heard extensively, I'm sure, about the low levels of reporting. If you guys do your jobs well, you may increase reporting—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Okay. So just be prepared for increased levels of reporting. It's a good thing.

Ms. Lucia Spencer: And to conclude, I'd just like to point out again the three messages: collaborate broadly across sectors, focus on the evidence, and be ready for the long term.

I want to stress the point of the long term because, according to the statistics, of every 100 incidents of sexual violence that happen in our society, only six are reported to the police. So what happens to the other 94? It's going to take us a long time in order to get to the results that we want to see in our respective societies.

What we believe from our world view is that every home should be safe, everyone should be free to walk the streets, to be in a particular workplace, and we want to make sure that happens.

The challenges are many, but with you taking the time to be here to listen to the voices of individuals across the

sector, it tells us that you recognize the issue, and we want to go forward to make sure that we succeed in making our society a better place.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. I am from London, which is where the Fourth R and Neighbours, Friends and Families were both developed, so I'm delighted to hear you speak like that about those programs and I'm proud to take that back to my community.

I had a question. In your written brief you talk about the need to engage with municipal partners. Now, are you thinking specifically of these crime prevention committees that every municipality has or were you thinking in different ways about municipal engagement? Can you just expand a little bit about that as a recommendation for this committee?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: I went and visited London and I've wondered what you put in the water there because you've got some of the best work happening.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: It's really impressive.

There are a number of points, because municipalities do a lot of different things. So yes, definitely the crime prevention committees, and there's also talk of adding community safety planning to either the Municipal Act or the Police Services Act. If you do that, I would encourage you to include violence against women within that mandate because it's not the most present compared to youth violence and neighbourhood issues.

Depending on the way the municipalities are organized, there are so many services delivered by the municipalities that are inter-linked with particularly domestic violence issues. All of the financial assistance programs—there's a big survivor-assistance piece that happens between the shelters, the community agencies and the city. Engaging the cities is important.

1530

I know that Toronto has a big funding program. I can't remember what it's called. I think it used to be called Breaking the Cycle. They were specifically funding violence-against-women work, too. It's not just us who are interested.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're seeing a nodding head from the back of the room from MPP Soo Wong, who has joined us. She's from Toronto, and she says, yes, that's the name of the group.

Our next question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you. I—

Interjections.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay, guys. Shh.

Thank you very much, Nancy and Lucia, for your excellent presentation. I guess I'm going to have to familiarize myself a little bit more with one of the programs that you made a reference to, but I guess my question would be—and I'm going to maybe centre not only provincially, but here locally—is there a particular community, based on your evidence that you've collected

or that you're aware of, that is most at risk here in Ottawa?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Young people.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay, that's easy. So what are we doing—

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Definitely young people.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: So is that why your efforts in terms of supporting some local initiatives have come from helping them, such as ManUp? Is that what you're referring to in terms of—so our youth are at risk. What would you recommend to this committee in reaching out, but also preventing them from either being sexually assaulted or becoming the aggressor or the perpetrator?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Well, use the tools where kids already are. The schools have kids in their hands five hours a day, five days a week, 10 months a year, so the school system is key. Then there are all of the ways in which we are already engaging with kids; whether it be the homework clubs, the after-school programs or the recreation pieces, kids already are in a lot of collective places where they congregate.

I wouldn't make a separate thing over here. I'd add in to what you're already doing, because I know there's a lot of youth programming in Ottawa who are seeing, for example—we did research on sexual violence in social media because we were seeing it emerge as a problem. Most of who we started engaging with were the violence-against-women agencies, but then it's the Boys and Girls Club who are begging me: "Well, Nancy, what do I do? Because they're doing it in our after-school program." So it's engaging with kids where they are.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here. I would like to ask you to expand on two elements of that. The first is the Fourth R. Is that a provincial program? Is that being implemented in all school boards, or is that being done on an individual basis? If you could expand a little bit on that.

The second one is on the "evidence-based." You've got a statement in here that too many things have been done in the past that simply don't work. You mentioned one, Just Say No. Is there any body that is doing an evaluation on these different programs? Who is that body, what are those bodies and, of course, are they third party—not the people who are doing the programs themselves—doing the evaluation of those programs? Expand on that a little bit.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: The Fourth R is a curriculum. What we have been paying for is the training of teachers and the purchase of the curriculum materials, which were developed by the University of Western Ontario, CAMH and the Thames Valley school board. For school boards to use the curriculum, they have to purchase it. It's a curriculum that we have supported because of the strength of it.

Mr. Randy Hillier: How widespread would its adoption be?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: In Ottawa, we've pretty much covered the two English boards, and we've engaged successfully with one of the two French boards. In the rest of the province, you'd really have to ask them. I know that they've kind of looked to me with, "Can you get other cities to do this, too?" I know that they've got a real big pickup in London.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: And in the US.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Well, they've got big pickup outside of Ontario, too, but you'd have to ask them because that's really about their sales.

In my personal opinion, what the province should do is purchase the curriculum and make it available for all schools all the time. That's just my personal opinion.

Mr. Randy Hillier: That's what we want to hear.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: With regard to evaluation, there are significant departments of criminology at the two universities here in Ottawa, Carleton and Ottawa U, and I suspect that's the same in most universities. We work with the criminology departments.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, I want to thank you both very much for coming and giving your presentation today. We very much appreciate it. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish.

CORNERSTONE HOUSING FOR WOMEN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters, Cornerstone Housing for Women, to come forward. Please make yourselves comfortable. Have a seat. You will have up to 15 minutes to make your presentation to our committee. That will be followed by questions by our committee members. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Thank you very much for having us this afternoon. My name is Sue Garvey. I'm the executive director of Cornerstone Housing for Women. I'm here with my colleagues Elissa Scott and Arwen McKechnie, both of whom work with me at Cornerstone.

Just a little bit about us: We are an organization here in Ottawa that provides emergency shelter and safe, affordable housing for women who have been homeless and who are still at risk of homelessness. We see about 400 women every year who live with us for either short or longer periods of time, many of whom are living with a combination of mental health issues, long-term trauma and abuse, and the effects of sexual and physical violence that have been extreme in their lives, often from day one and early childhood.

We wanted to speak to you today because homeless women in particular—it was interesting because Nancy, in her presentation earlier, was talking about special populations. Homeless women are often invisible in their communities. You may not see them as much as you see homeless men. They're invisible for a reason, and the reason is because of sexual violence and the violence that they are subjected to all the time. They live in fear of the violence of life, often in their inadequate housing, but certainly on the street.

As part of your hearings, first of all, I want to say thank you for this process that you're going through. As I was sitting there listening to the other presentations, it was very sobering to recognize that sexual violence is just so pervasive, that so many people from all these different backgrounds are coming to speak to you. I'm sure it must be overwhelming at times to hear all of that and to think, "Oh, my God, it's so big. How can we possibly even begin to address this?" It's encouraging, on the other hand, that we are addressing it and we're talking about it. I really applaud the Premier for this initiative and all of you who are participating in it as well. We do look forward to hearing the results of what you come up with at the end.

We did want to make sure that homeless women were heard about, and stories were told about the particular situations that they face. Their lives are so subject to sexual violence that it's really important that you hear about them. This afternoon, we'll try to highlight some of the main issues that face homeless women in particular, and we're going to talk to you a little bit about the issues, some recommendations, and our hopes for the future for them as well.

I'll hand it over to Elissa and Arwen.

Ms. Elissa Scott: Thank you. "Homelessness" is a term that reflects broad groups of people and circumstances. People can experience chronic homelessness, meaning they repeatedly cycle in and out of emergency shelters, or episodic homelessness, which occurs when people experience a short period of homelessness after a life crisis. There are also the hidden homeless: people who are forced to couch-surf among their networks of friends, family and sexual partners.

1540

Most people have an idea of what a person experiencing homelessness looks like, but the reality is much more complex, particularly for women. Homeless women comprise a large and diverse population, but in particular homelessness affects women who experience multiple barriers based on their ability, ethnicity, class and/or gender presentation. Homeless women encompass many sub-groups, including teenagers, lone parents, trans women, single women, aboriginal women, immigrant and refugee women, and senior women. Among the population of women experiencing homelessness are also those with severe and persistent mental health issues and those with chronic health conditions.

Despite the diversity in the female homeless population, they all overwhelmingly share one common experience: repeated exposure to sexual violence. Sexual violence against women is deeply interconnected with women's homelessness or unstable housing. Many homeless women have experienced a history of abuse—physical, sexual and/or emotional—that began in childhood at the hands of people they trusted and that continued into their adult lives and their domestic relationships, making home life intolerable.

Women flee their homes to escape violence, only to encounter it again on the streets. Even once re-housed,

women may find themselves the victims of an apartment takeover, an increasing trend in Ontario in which women find themselves at the mercy of unwelcome houseguests who move in without their consent and who often target them for sex.

Many large-scale studies report findings that repeatedly emphasize the violence and traumatic lives of homeless women. Violence is the most important issue facing homeless women, more so than mental health or addiction problems. A staggering 92% of homeless women experience severe physical and/or sexual assault at some point in time in their lives. Based on our experience as front-line staff working directly with homeless women, we feel the percentage would be more accurately closer to 100%.

One disturbing aspect of repeated exposure to sexual violence that we have noted in our work with homeless women is that sexual violence becomes a normalized and somewhat expected part of life. While this does not diminish the trauma of a survivor's experience, it does impede them from accessing important resources, like health care and police services.

A range of factors increase homeless women's risk of adult sexual victimization, including:

- childhood abuse;
- substance use;
- length of time homeless;
- engaging in economic survival strategies, such as panhandling or involvement in sex work;
- location while homeless, such as sleeping on the street versus sleeping in a shelter; and
- the presence of mental illness.

Women with no history of mental health issues can develop post-traumatic stress disorder, clinical depression and anxiety disorders. Women may also turn to substance use as a tool to cope with their trauma, which in the short term may numb or mitigate the trauma of their experience, and in the long term place them at greater risk for sexual violence.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: An experience that has always stuck with me from my experience in front-line work—not through Cornerstone, but through a different shelter—is this woman who was staying at the emergency shelter I worked at who was sexually assaulted in a parking lot on a busy downtown street on a weekend in the middle of July—like, a dozen people passed by and saw her. She was a habitual crack user, and she got high and passed out and was assaulted. When she came to, she was devastated, as understandably anyone would be. She didn't want to go to the police; she had a history with them. She was not at all sure that they would take her seriously, that they would be sympathetic. She was using crack to escape the trauma of her experiences, and it led to further victimization. It's indicative to me of how coping mechanisms can be good to a point, and then more support is needed or they become hazardous themselves.

Ms. Elissa Scott: Many women who already experience mental health issues because of the trauma of their

childhood experiences will have their conditions exacerbated by being homeless. Homelessness is a major health issue for women with serious implications, such as sexual victimization, engaging in sex work as a means of economic survival, unavailability of contraception, uncertain fertility and the desire for intimacy, which may result in an unplanned pregnancy among homeless women. Homeless women who are pregnant are at risk of complications because of lack of prenatal care, poor nutrition and exposure to violence.

Homeless women are at increased risk for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and other sexually transmitted infections.

Homeless women encounter systemic and personal barriers which impede their access to preventive and acute health care services.

Toronto-based doctor Stephen Hwang, a leading authority on morbidity and mortality among the homeless, notes that homeless women 18 to 44 years of age were 10 times more likely to die than women in the general population of Toronto.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: That was a lot of sad information. Homelessness is a very sad phenomenon.

That being said, we have some recommendations that we think could make a huge impact on the lives of women experiencing homelessness. Homeless women, like all women, deserve to live lives free from violence. This isn't a health issue, it's not a safety issue; it's a fundamental human right that all people should enjoy. The following recommendations, we feel, are a good starting point to ending the violence that permeates the lives of women living on or near the streets.

First off, we desperately need more safe, affordable housing mandated in urban centres. There are already-existing models to follow in Canada that promote mixed-use buildings and support the integration of affordable housing into new housing developments, including in the city of Toronto. Inclusionary zoning practices are also being followed in Montreal and Vancouver. Private members' bills which can strengthen the ability of cities to create affordable housing have already been tabled in this provincial Legislature five times by NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo and, most recently, by a member of the current government, the MPP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Peter Milczyn, last November. It would make a huge difference. Safe, affordable housing also includes giving people the tools to ensure they can maintain their housing regarding apartment takeovers; and giving them the support to prevent family violence from occurring, which is a later predictor of homelessness.

We'd also like to see more sensitization and training among the major service providers that homeless women interact with regularly—that would be the police, the hospitals and the corrections system, including provincial jails. Specifically, we'd like to see trauma-informed training, including explicit training in working with marginalized populations, and greater awareness of issues relating to mental health, addictions and homelessness. As front-line workers, we see the direct impact of police officers who have had mental health training.

Ms. Elissa Scott: We thought it was inherently important to give you concrete examples of why this is beneficial.

A few weeks ago, I had a client come into the homeless shelter who had been brutally sexually assaulted as well as physically assaulted. As a result of complications regarding this assault and mental health issues, she became quite delusional and quite violent, so we had to call the police to come and help us with the situation. Two police officers showed up. One had mental health training; the other did not. The first officer, who did not have mental health training, proceeded to get quite aggressive with the woman and tried to cuff her because he wanted to bring her to jail, whereas the other officer, who had mental health training, was able to quietly talk with the woman, de-escalate the situation, escort her successfully out of the shelter—without cuffs, which is important—and take her to the hospital. It's quite a concrete example of the benefits of mental health training.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: Generally speaking, when survivors of sexual assault are treated well, as in any kind of circumstance, they tend to be more responsive and more receptive to receiving support; they're more apt to report. They're also less likely to experience re-traumatization based on the dismissal of their story or their inherent value.

Improved sensitization would also mean better coordination between emergency rooms and emergency shelters and rape crisis centres to prevent homeless women from being retraumatized after an assault.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: Okay.

We'd like better discharge planning between hospitals, corrections and shelter services so that women aren't just left on a shelter doorstep. We would also, ideally speaking, like to work collaboratively, like a lot of service providers have talked about before you, on improving linkages between different service providers and helping women navigate access to the services they need in a fairly complex system.

We'll do our part to remove the barriers between services available to homeless and abused women and strengthen relationships between different agencies with these mandates. We'll also build on the collaborative work already under way in this city between violence-against-women shelters and child welfare systems.

Ideally speaking, we would also like to see rape crisis centres have the capacity to deliver on-site support within places homeless women access services, like emergency shelters and day programs. The Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario already provides core funding to rape crisis centres. A very small increase might allow them to provide this essential service.

1550

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. I have to say that we don't know each

other, but I was on the task force at the United Way for affordable housing for seniors. Our chair referred all the time about her involvement with—

Ms. Sue Garvey: Carol Burrows.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Yes.

I guess I want to maybe broaden our question in asking you that: We're hearing a lot about the distinction between sexual violence and domestic violence. Based on your opinion, and the clients you are helping, what do you think about that? Is there a difference? Is that something we should differentiate, or are they something similar?

Ms. Sue Garvey: There's a fair amount of overlap between the two, and we often get confused with violence-against-women shelters. That's because there is a lot of overlap and a lot of similarity, the main similarity being the fact that women have all experienced sexual violence.

The difference is that in our situation, women are coming to us primarily because they don't have anyplace to stay tonight—they don't have a home—where women in violence-against-women shelters are leaving their home because of violence within their home. It's a little bit of a distinction.

Probably more than anything else, the distinction is in two things. One is the way we get funded. We are funded under the Ministry of Community and Social Services, where they are probably funded from the same ministry, but under the violence-against-women section.

The other thing is that the women who live in homeless shelters have a high incidence of mental health issues as well. So there is that extra complication that they have, which just makes their issues a little bit different.

In violence-against-women shelters, there is a lot of work around custody issues with children and that sort of thing: How do we get people to have their rights under the law? We're working primarily to get people safely housed, first and foremost, because we know that they can't even begin to look at pulling their lives together unless they have a safe place to live.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Did you want to finish anything that you didn't get to in your presentation? I certainly don't mind if you want to say a few more things. I am willing to donate my time, because this is your presentation.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: That's very kind.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's not a problem. I admire your work, so please.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: I think we covered everything in the written brief.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I will ask a question, then. Sue, I know you've got a very long history of helping homeless women. Is there a model anywhere? It doesn't have to be in Canada.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Pardon? Say that again?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Is there a model to help homeless women? As you explained to Marie-France, it's very

different than someone fleeing violence and looking for shelter. These are homeless women who may need help for the rest of their lives. Is there a model anywhere, a best practice that you could help guide us to? I mean, we're underserved everywhere with the housing supply, in every capacity.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Absolutely. It's great to be able to be here and draw the connection between sexual violence and affordable housing. For us, if you said, of the three areas of recommendation we made today, what do we feel is at the bottom of it all, we would probably say it really is safe, affordable housing. You can't really begin to do anything with your life until you have a safe place to live. Women who are living in unsafe situations are staying in them. They're staying in unsafe relationships, on the street and domestically, because they don't have anyplace to live.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Is there anyplace—any church, organization or anybody—that has a program?

Ms. Sue Garvey: There are lots of them. I mean, at Cornerstone, we have four just in our—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Four, yes.

Ms. Sue Garvey: —and we have lots of community partners as well who do—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

Ms. Sue Garvey: I think there are some great models going on right now. In most affordable housing communities, you will find lots of work being done around sexual violence as well. The two come together.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final comments for you are from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I come from London, and there's a project currently under way to apply a gender lens to a Housing First approach for homeless women.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Yes, I read that.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: There is a lot of focus on Housing First approaches, but they were designed with homeless men in mind. So there has to be some acknowledgement of the particular experiences of homeless women, and you've really done a great job with this brief in setting that out.

Is this something that you're also interested in, applying a gender lens to Housing First approaches? Or is this—I'm trying to understand. I'm thinking of my knowledge of what's going on in London versus your recommendations here.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Yes, and the Housing First model is something that is really sweeping the whole country, as you probably know, and that is a factor of some good research that has been done and also just decisions that the federal government has made, in terms of its policy directions.

The jury is still out in Ottawa in terms of how successful Housing First is going to be. It's dependent on a number of factors coming together, one of the biggest ones being that we're expecting the private market to step up and take incentives to actually house people who are at risk of homelessness, many of whom live with mental health issues. So we're really hopeful.

Our agency is one of the ones that has been impacted negatively in that we have received funding cuts as part of the reallocation of funds, but also we're going to do our best to make this work, because we do believe that, in the end, we don't want people living in shelters. The longer someone lives in a shelter, the more vulnerable they become, the more time is wasted not being able to move on in their lives. So we're doing our very best to make this new model work, but certainly one of our things is about how it is going to impact women.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, I want to thank you very much for appearing before our committee today, and I invite you to join our audience now if you wish to. We need to continue with our next presenters.

LABOUR OHCOV ACADEMIC RESEARCH COLLABORATION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to invite members of labour occupational health clinics academic to come forward. Thank you. Good afternoon. Please make yourselves comfortable. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and then they will ask you some questions. Please start by stating your names for the record.

Ms. Laura Lozanski: Laura Lozanski

Ms. Katherine Lippel: And Katherine Lippel.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Ms. Laura Lozanski: Katherine and I will share the speaking. I will speak to the document that you have that says "LOARC" on it, the blue on it. Katherine will speak to the other documents.

My role is, I'm a former nurse but an occupational health and safety officer for the Canadian Association of University Teachers, who are part of this group. We felt it was really, really important to address this issue. Our focus is on workplace safety, so we felt it was really important to address this issue in particular.

I'm just going to do the Coles Notes version of the document. I'll go through, hit the highlights, and then I would like to turn it over to Katherine.

Just starting at the beginning, it says, "Twenty-eight percent of Canadians say they have been" sexually harassed or—"sexually-charged talk while on the job." That was from the Premier's own task force.

"Forty-five percent of ... workers report being bullied on the job."

Senator Michael Kirby has noted that, "Ten to twenty-five percent of Canadian workplaces [are] effectively mentally injurious—not good for the mental health of their employees" and the "leading cause of short-term disability and long-term disability—it's the biggest single reason people are off work for periods of time."

Out of that came the new CSA psychological standard. I was a part of the group on developing that and will mention it as I go through. But just in short terms, we believe that harassment should not be looked at in isolation. It's one of a continuum of behaviours in the workplace. Those of us who work for labour organiza-

tions see that in the course of our duties. So it's important to recognize and address these unwanted behaviours early, because they can lead to workplace violence.

We're all about prevention. What can we do to identify and prevent it? Lori Dupont is a very well-known case that has been recognized.

Workers experience sexism and misogyny as well as other types of harassment, such as homophobia, transphobia, racism, colonialism and ableism. So there's a whole continuum and a whole set of triggers around why people get harassed in the workplace. We believe it's time to look beyond the physical impacts of the harassment spectrum of behaviours and pay attention to the mental injuries as well.

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In April 2014, the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal—WSIAT—decided on a constitutional question of a case that was a study into a manager's unabated, escalating, verbal and emotional harassment that left a nurse very sick with PTSD. In a precedent-setting decision, the WSIAT allowed the appeal and determined that WSIAT sections denying entitlement for mental stress violate the charter and are therefore unconstitutional. I'd really like to keep that at the forefront of what we're talking about.

While we are pleased that the Premier has launched the action plan, we really want to find some ways to concretely deal with it. One of the things that was mentioned by the Premier was that they wanted to introduce legislation to strengthen the Occupational Health and Safety Act to include a definition of "sexual harassment." We'll speak to that later in the document. The legislation would set out explicit requirements for employers to investigate and address workplace harassment, and that's the key to what we need to talk about.

Work organization tends to be a trigger, and harassment may be affected or influenced by high work demands, poor work organization, lack of organizational response, condoning etc. We saw that through all the research we did as the committee on the psychological standard.

Up until now, the focus of workplace law, policy and action has been on what management is doing to react to individual harassment of other individuals at work, and we need to see this in the context of a holistic approach to harassment, period. While individual behaviour plays an important role, the strategy does not address why the frequency of harassment is still increasing.

Our research suggests that failure to reduce harassment is a failure to address the role that corporate policy, particularly the organization of work, plays in accepting, fostering and encouraging harassment and other adverse behaviours.

Work overload, lack of recognition and rewards, unreasonable and unmanageable deadlines, short-staffing situations, difficult working relationships—it could go on and on and on—are all catalysts to harassment in the workplace. They are not the only catalysts—there can be many others—but they are certainly a large part of it. The

LOARC research suggests that when managers are the source of bullying and harassment, workers are more likely to suffer physical and mental effects.

We need to look at the significant invisible injuries that are happening in the workplace. Psychological hazards are the most common workplace hazards that we face currently; it's the big thing on the list. We've developed, along with many other researchers, highly reliable tools to investigate and evaluate psychological hazards that can lead to harassment in the workplace.

In Europe and at the International Labour Organization, there are guides for inspectors—and this is key for us, because right now, the inspectors cannot investigate harassment, with the way the act reads at this point in time. There are guides for the inspectors on how to address psychological hazards. The particular training and support that inspectors need is known. In this submission, we would like to bring that to your attention.

How can we address the hazards? We need to restate the question. We have to first understand how workplace hazards are currently handled. In Ontario, hazards are handled in three ways: compensation, prevention and enforcement. Compensation is the responsibility of WSIB, and prevention and enforcement are the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, so sometimes it's not connecting.

Under WSIB, we've lost the ability for compensation that used to exist at one point in time. There is little that can be done at this point in time if a person is suffering severe stress from harassment of any kind in the workplace.

Under the Ministry of Labour, there is no enforcement. The inspectors simply can't do anything around that, except to ensure that there is a policy in the workplace, but they can't even really enforce that either. The ministry direction to staff ensures limited enforcement. Its policy manual restricts the inspectors' roles and responsibilities when addressing harassment. It reinforces the message that the inspector is restricted to enforcing only the explicit statutory requirements that the employer have a policy and inform its employees, which really amounts to nothing because employers don't take that seriously.

"The inspector shall not issue an order to an employer to follow its own policy or program. The inspector shall not issue an order to an employer to have its harassment program in writing." How can you have a program if it's not in writing?

There's an important link between harassment and exercising health and safety rights. We're concerned about reprisals. Reprisals have been a very large issue for us, whether it's non-unionized or unionized members. If a member puts forward a complaint around harassment in the workplace, that there have been reprisals, it's often referred to the OWA or the Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic. There's no mechanism currently that can effectively deal with reprisals under section 50 in the act as it is. We need to look at prevention. Roméo Dallaire certainly spoke to this issue several times with the ministry, recognizing an honourable injury, as he called it.

Ministry attention to the female-dominated health care sector is also disproportionate to the comparative size and injury rate of this sector. There's a perfect wall: no compensation, no enforcement, no protection of workers who complain and no prevention. What can we do to change this? We need to look at the current role and how the structure is laid out. The prevention division needs to step up and take proactive measures to fully and authentically promote existing available tools, approaches and preventive measures.

The CSA standard Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace—Prevention, Promotion, and Guidance to Staged Implementation is a useful starting point. The mental health commission has promoted this widely. It also speaks to work organization. Can employers, workers and joint health and safety committees accurately and reliably assess their workplace for psychosocial hazards? Yes, they can, and in fact, the CSA addresses that very issue and encourages that to happen.

The MIT strategy: I'm also part of another group called the mental injury team. We have a Mental Injury Toolkit strategy, and many of the members of the LOARC group are part of that group with others. We're a mix of researchers, health care professionals and unions. We also developed a tool which was presented to the ministry last year. The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire, COPSOQ, is an internationally accepted and reliable construct that is a good survey that employers can use in the workplace. It's been used many, many times through the MIT organization. In fact, there have been at least 15 events, 55 workplaces and 1,800 surveys. This survey helps the workplace capture what's going on and develop some strategies around dealing with that.

The last thing that I would say is that we would suggest that sexual harassment be part of a sexual harassment continuum instead of being defined separately.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have three and a half minutes remaining in your entire presentation.

Ms. Katherine Lippel: Thank you very much. Very briefly and quickly, I hold the Canada Research Chair in Occupational Health and Safety Law. I'm not a member of LOARC, but I have read their brief. I'm here, first of all, to make myself available to support the content and provide you with the scientific background that underpins what they said.

I was listening to what was being asked before, and the distinction between sexual violence and violence against women. I think our brief speaks to this in the sense that sexual harassment is a subset of psychological harassment, which is also part of work organization and psychosocial hazards at work. If we look too narrowly at the issue and just look at sexual harassment, we're going to miss the issues that are making women ill at work because of sexual violence that is much more subtle than sexual harassment.

You've got three documents that I've brought. This one is the report of a survey by the national institute of public health in Quebec. I was first author on the chapter on violence. That's at page 9 of that document. So if

you're going to read anything else besides their excellent brief, read pages 9 and 10, because what you'll see is that sexual harassment represented about 3% of the Quebec population—this is the only Canadian study on violence in the workplace including psychological harassment, sexual harassment and physical violence in the workplace. In all three cases, women are more exposed than men. Some 3% of workers are exposed to sexual harassment, 15% to psychological harassment, and 19% of women and only 14% of men are exposed to psychological harassment. There are a lot of factors that lead to psychological harassment. I don't have time to get into that, but if there are questions, I will answer them.

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You have two other documents. One is written by me, on workers' compensation across Canada. The issue in the LOARC brief is that mental injuries are not adequately compensated in Ontario, and they're right. The long version is in the article as to why they are right. The other article is also written by me, on the regulation of violence in the workplace across Canada.

In closing, what I would like to say to you in relation to this is that it's a gender issue. Women are more exposed to violence in the workplace than men. One of the key findings of our Quebec study was that the higher up men went in the hierarchy, the more they were protected from psychological violence—so the university-educated men will not be targeted—but in the case of women, the university-educated women were just as vulnerable to psychological violence as the women at the bottom of the ladder.

We need good tools, and in a nutshell, Ontario's legal instruments are inadequate right now.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for that information. Our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much for joining us today. You covered a lot of ground, but I think I'll restrict the question to one area; otherwise, I won't get it in.

In talking about sexual harassment in the workplace, I think there's a pretty clear lack of understanding about what even constitutes sexual harassment. A lot of people think the bar has to be way up here and really feel that they're not even guilty of it. In some of the things that I've learned, people think that a lot of things are just okay.

I was more taken by what is apparently a lack of protection from reprisals if someone files a complaint. You were talking about the difference between here and British Columbia. What do we need to do to level that field so that workers under the Occupational Health and Safety Act here are getting the same kind of protection? If they're a victim of sexual harassment and then they raise the issue, what do we need to do to protect them from reprisals more than, clearly, we're doing?

Ms. Katherine Lippel: There are two issues. There's sexual harassment, and there's harassment because you're a woman, for instance, which is not quite the same

thing. Both of them are problems; both of them should be looked at. If the legislator wants to avoid getting into legal battles about, "Is this sexual harassment or sexist harassment or just harassment?"—all three are going to make people sick, so the first thing is to have a broader definition and not just restrict it to sexual harassment.

The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act looks at psychological harassment, which would include sexual harassment within it, but the only protections that are given in the OHSA in Ontario are much more restrictive than if we're talking about prevention of violence.

Physical violence: You, as a worker, have the right to protection from that. If you file a claim and there's a reprisal because you complained, there is recourse.

Psychological harassment: The language in the law is too narrow, so that the only requirement as the Ministry of Labour interprets it now—and correctly so, I believe—is that the employer has to have a policy.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for taking the time to come to this committee.

Earlier this week, we received a brief from the Ontario Federation of Labour with some specific recommendations for amendments to the OHSA. One of the things that they really stressed was the need to have a joint investigation process involving both the employer and a worker representative. I wondered if you had any comments on the investigation process and the importance of a joint process.

Ms. Katherine Lippel: I have a doctoral student who has studied this in Quebec. I haven't studied it in Ontario. She was looking at unionized workplaces and harassment prevention. When labour relations are good, it's excellent to have a joint committee. It's much more effective, much more credible. When relationships are bad, however, it's not necessarily going to work. But this said that if there is a joint mechanism available, it has been shown to be more effective in those places where collaboration is possible.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I just want to echo the comments of my colleagues. It was really good of you to come today; in particular, because it's so useful for us to have the kind of legislative construct recommendations that you're proposing. As you're probably aware, stronger workplace safety legislation is envisioned as part of the action plan, so this is really helpful in that context.

I've asked some presenters on this topic—we haven't had many, which is why it's so great to have you here—to really envision for us what a harassment-free workplace would look like. I know that's a paradigm shift for you, because it's thinking out of the box. But it's Friday, and I wonder, in addition to legislative constructs you've addressed here, if perhaps you could really think about employee supports. For example, we've heard that more empowerment is necessary and more education is necessary for employees. Is that something that resonates

with you? Could we be doing that, and should we be doing it?

Ms. Laura Lozanski: Certainly, in the union and labour movement, it's always been an issue around empowerment in the workplace for different issues, particularly around joint health and safety issues in the workplace. So for us, it's effectively using the joint health and safety committee. The employer will set the tone in the workplace. If the employer sets a good tone of expectations and takes effective, proactive, timely action on these issues in the workplace, it goes a long way.

Absolutely, we feel that there are already mechanisms available. Empowering workers to feel comfortable and safe to speak up is one of those mechanisms.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now for our final presentation. We appreciate your presentation this afternoon.

OTTAWA RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I now would like to call up the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre. Welcome. You have the distinction of being the very last presenter, not only today but after two weeks of travelling for this committee.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Wow. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin by stating your name for the record.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: My name is Sunny Marriner. I'm the executive director of the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre. I should say that I'm not accustomed to reading scripted remarks, but I'm also not widely known for my brevity, so I thought this would be the best way to go.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Well, just to remind you then, you have 15 minutes to address this committee.

Mr. John Yakabuski: This Chair is very, very precise.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: I've noticed this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): But you know, if I didn't do this, we'd be about an hour or two behind, so I want to accommodate you.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Thank you.

I want to thank the committee for hearing from me today and to recognize the difficult work that you're engaged in. In preparation for my testimony, I have reviewed the transcripts of all of your hearings that are available online to date, and I applaud you on the diversity of voices that you've included.

As you know, the topic you're charged with tackling, sexual violence and harassment, is vast and critically important to women and children, to all members of civil society, and to legislators, policy-makers and ministries. You have a large job ahead of you, and I know you've had a very long day today. So as I've said, thank you for sticking through it with me.

As committee time is precious, I've tactically decided that my time with you will be most valuable if I address

some specifics that I think you may not have already heard from others. That said, I'd like to fully endorse the comments of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and the many front-line sexual assault centre workers who have testified to date, including my colleagues from Cornerstone and SASC today.

I assure you that I would repeat all these comments in their entirety to you, if I didn't have a very limited amount of time to try to summarize my learning from almost 20 years of work with survivors of sexual violence. With that in mind, I'm going to be focusing on what I'll call the 90 and the 10: the 90% of survivors who do not report sexual violence to hospitals or the criminal justice system and the 10% who do. I'll offer you five recommendations, and believe me, it was very difficult to pick which ones, as I have many. Then, I'll look forward to taking your questions.

My comments to you today are drawn from my experience as a front-line worker, a legal advocate, a researcher and, now, the head of Canada's third-oldest rape crisis centre. ORCC has the distinction of being one of the first three centres in Canada, with Toronto preceding us by only a few months. This means that as much as Ontario is leading the discussion on sexual violence in the country today, we were also leading it over 40 years ago when no one in Canada or, indeed, the world was willing to speak openly about sexual assault and child sexual abuse, or that they slow the progress of full equality and equal participation in civil society, particularly for women and girls.

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In thinking of how Ontario can best support that 90% of survivors who never report, it's important to understand the sexual assault centre history. Sexual assault centres formed because survivors themselves created them in response to very negative experiences with institutionally based services, many of which you've continued to hear about here at this committee. Survivors built sexual assault centres on volunteer labour, without funding, as an answer to the stigmatization, psychiatrization, disbelief and deeply flawed responses they found with those who were being deemed the experts in sexual violence.

Over the ensuing 40 years, these survivors and their centres have led almost every discipline and sector, including academia, in developing evidence-based practices, programs, policy, public education, prevention and law. As one of my colleagues from London said earlier, to use a medical analogy, we are the surgeons or specialists working with general practitioners in our communities.

This is important because one of the themes I've noted in reviewing the transcripts is that many of the needs that you've heard about, such as survivor-based centres, experts with specialized training, legal advocates, public education and prevention experts, 24-hour crisis lines—these things do exist and they've been highly developed by sexual assault centres across the province, which I think inevitably leads us to the question: If they're here,

then why doesn't everyone know about them and why can't everyone access them?

By way of a partial answer, I'll share with you that my advertising and promotion budget last year was \$500. That's barely enough to print a pamphlet, as you can see, let alone to publicize what we do, to survivors and to the other organizations that need and come to us for this expertise. But lest you think this is simply a plug for funding, I'll refer back to what others have noted before this committee: An inevitable effect of the increased focus on sexual violence and the Premier's laudable action plan will be that more survivors will be coming forward to seek support.

At ORCC this past fall, when sexual violence discussions were peaking in the media, we had a 300% increase in requests for support in less than a month. This is how you get waiting lists, something that we should all consider totally unacceptable. If we're going to urge survivors to come forward and report, there's a moral imperative that we be prepared to support them when they do with free, confidential survivor-based support that doesn't require that they access the justice system. Part of this will mean ensuring sexual assault centres can publicize and expand what we do, so all survivors know about it, and that other concerned groups are not inadvertently creating duplications of expert services that already exist, as this not only creates confusion and incoherence for survivors in communities but it also exponentially increases our costs.

This leads me to my first two recommendations. First, build on the network. Don't be led to believe that you have to reinvent the wheel. When trying to respond to complex problems, we tend to believe that bigger is better, and I understand this temptation. We want to provide the best services and supports to the widest number of people equally in every part of this province. I will share with you, though, that decades of research shows that, overwhelmingly, survivors report having been most helped by supports they received from independent sexual assault centres. I think we can all agree that adaptation is not the strength of large bureaucracies, but adaptation is what's required to meet survivors' unique needs and communities' unique needs, particularly as these needs become more and more complex, which I know you've been hearing about a lot at this committee.

This is what sexual assault centres do well: We adapt, we fill gaps, we respond, and we've been teaching other people how to do this too for 40 years. Crucially, also, our services are free and 100% confidential, which empowers survivors to control their own information and means that marginalized communities of women and girls most vulnerable to violence can actually access free counselling and legal advocacy. That said, I urge you to build on that network of independent sexual assault centres across the province so that the work of survivors isn't lost.

The second piece is, don't try to improve access by cutting services—not to say that you would, but we have seen this before. We need to resist the temptation to

address waiting lists by shortening or limiting the amount of support available to survivors through sexual assault centres. In other efforts to revamp services, we've seen shortages of resources addressed by cutting back on long-term support. Survivors are very concerned that this might happen with sexual violence too. Survivors of sexual violence, as you've heard, are often faced with very complex, layered social oppressions, and new issues can and do arise over time. Limiting long-term counselling and advocacy flies directly in the face of what evidence shows is best practice in helping to empower survivors and help them heal.

Turning to the 10% of survivors who do report to the criminal justice system, I'll be spending more time there than I usually would want to, but I think that there are some drilling-down points that might be helpful.

I need to add that for 15 years, I've specialized in supporting and advocating for women and girls who have unsuccessfully attempted to report their abusers to police. Over this time, I've learned a lot, often by asking the wrong questions, but this has also taught me how to focus on the right ones. I'm hoping to share some of those with this committee to spare you my 15-year learning curve.

A common question that you've heard asked over the last nine months is, why don't more women report? I know you've asked it, and I know you've heard it. I'd like us to reframe that question to, what would change today if all women and girls did go and report sexual violence? I submit to the committee that the answer is, unfortunately, very little. I believe the subject of our focus should not be the number of reports, although that's important, but instead what happens to those reports after they're made.

This information is astonishingly difficult to get. I've been working for many years to get comprehensive, seemingly simple statistics from police services, and the only time I've had any success was when the University of Ottawa faculty of law used its human and financial resources to file freedom-of-information requests. It should not be this difficult for the community to find out what's happening to women after they report to police. I believe in community-based responses, but those start with standardizing public knowledge so that we're responding to the right things.

The statistics that we did receive told a very frightening story. We learned that over six years—that was the information we were able to get—32.3% of sexual assault reports were classified as unfounded. "Unfounded" literally means that the police don't believe it; she made it up.

This number is astonishing, as all literature and research evidence shows that the rate of false reports of sexual assault is the same as, or lower than, all other types of crimes, which is to say somewhere between 1% and 5% at the most. Yet our analysis showed that almost seven times that number of women were being told they were not believed. We knew this in our centres, because women were coming to us in desperation.

Now, as important as these "unfounded" numbers were, another number is equally, if not more, informa-

tive. I learned this a little bit late. This is the average charge rate. Over the same six-year period, police laid charges in only 16.1% of all reported cases. What this means is that 84% of women who reported to police in those six years went home without charges being laid against anyone.

Thus, my third recommendation: Ensure that police sexual assault statistics are published regularly by city and by region, including "unfounded" numbers, those coded "founded but not enough evidence" and charge rates. As a province, we cannot, in good conscience, tell women they should report if we can't comprehensively speak to what's going to happen when they do.

If, as in our sample, police are disbelieving a third of them and only laying charges in 16% of them, adding an additional 100 or 1,000 reports will do nothing to address the reality that the overwhelming majority of women may as well have stayed home.

My next recommendation is that survivors whose cases are not going to result in charges be given written reasons when the police close the file. When we give nothing documented to women, they are trapped thereafter in a he-said-she-said with the police, who have infinitely more power and control. When we consider that these same women have already been caught in a he-said-she-said with an abuser who had more power and control, perhaps you can understand how asking women to engage in a second battle with police is what some people call secondary victimization.

It's entirely reasonable to document the reasons cases are not proceeding for complainants, so if there's a problem, she doesn't have to spend another 10 years trying to prove what happened when she reported.

I actually got an email from a woman in this situation yesterday. It's now 13 years after I met her, and we still can't get her files to find the reasons. Written reasons would have saved us and her 13 years.

Now, I don't want to send you all home in total despair and depression, especially on a Friday, so I'm going to finish with a bright light. There are mechanisms for us to create measurable, reviewable, actionable progress in policing sexual violence. I've been advocating regionally and provincially for a number of years for pilot projects based on what's known as the Philadelphia model.

Philadelphia police have, for the last 14 years, partnered successfully with their local rape crisis centre and women's legal advocates to conduct annual three-day reviews of their closed sexual assault cases, including all the cases that were coded "unfounded." This unprecedented project was in response to scandals in the Philadelphia PD's handling of sexual assault files, including "unfounded" rates of up to 50% and inaccurate case classifications that hid the majority of sexual assault reports without investigating.

What Philadelphia knew when this was discovered was that policing wasn't going to change in a lasting way without independent, ongoing, collaborative oversight relationships with the front-line workers who are the

experts in sexual violence. They also knew they weren't going to regain their credibility as a police service without that.

By allowing this institutionalized case review by VAW advocates, Philadelphia went from being the most scandal-ridden sexual assault unit in the United States to today having their model described repeatedly as the gold standard in sexual violence policing, including twice being reviewed by Human Rights Watch.

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In my own conversations, of which I've now had many, with the Philadelphia groups who developed the model, including the captain of their sexual assault unit, I've heard nothing but unprecedented praise for its effectiveness for all parties. I can tell you that it is not every day that I hear front-line rape crisis centre workers praising the police as their partners, and certainly not vice versa.

I've spoken a lot about best practices in supporting sexual assault survivors, but best practices in policing similarly tell us that the wave of the future must be transparent, accountable and measurable. It's not enough for us to say that we want women's experience of reporting to change. We need to be implementing proven practices that allow us to measurably identify where the problems are occurring that lead to inflated "unfounded" rates and the shocking level of attrition whereby only a tiny percentage of charges are laid. The Philadelphia model is a road map to how we can do that, thus improving women's confidence in reporting as an option for sexual assault.

I'm encouraged by the fact that step 3 of the Premier's action plan singles out best practices in policing and also by the fact that several MPPs have been very open to learning more about this model. Ottawa has already, in 18 months, come a very long way down this road, and I'd encourage this committee to contact me if you'd like to learn more about what we're trying to do to improve reporting outcomes.

Finally, I'd like to return to the 90% who so frequently have no voice on a provincial level. I do want you to know that there are several survivors who, I believe, have critical and instructive experiences that this committee could learn an enormous amount from. If we could have made it happen for them to be here safely, I would have happily turned over all of my time so their voices could have been heard directly. I would still like to make this happen, and I say so because I believe it could be of benefit to both you and them. So if there are any opportunities for them to bring their information to you over the next few months, I hope you will help me in empowering these amazing women to speak for themselves.

In summary, those final recommendations:

- (1) Build on existing networks.
- (2) Don't increase access by cutting services.
- (3) Ensure that police sexual assault statistics are published regularly by city and region, including "unfounded," those coded "founded but not enough evidence," and charge rates.

(4) Require that survivors whose cases are not going to result in charges be given written reasons when police close the file.

(5) Consider implementing pilot projects using the Philadelphia model of independent case review by frontline VAW experts in partnership with police.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Sunny. For your information, any voices that you want to be heard by this committee can put their information in writing, or they can actually call in to us in Toronto and we'll certainly listen to them. You have Will's address or email address, so you can communicate with him.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Wonderful. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our first question for you is from our MPP with our NDP caucus, MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Hi. Thank you so much for sticking with us for the whole day and keeping our attention so well during your presentation. I really appreciate that.

I'm interested in this Philadelphia model, which you and others have described as the gold standard of sexual violence policing. Has it resulted in an increase in reporting within Philadelphia?

Ms. Sunny Marriner: I think that's a great question, and I unfortunately don't know the answer. I know that it has resulted in a decrease in unfounding and an increase in charges, but I don't know if it has directly impacted the reporting rate. The reporting rates are very, very high, but I could get that information for the committee quite easily because I'm in contact with them.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Great. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Sunny, I want to say thank you for being here. We had a great conversation not too long ago. It was very much appreciated, actually, that you came today, and I know you're our last person.

I don't know if you want to share more things with this committee. I know you've touched on five direct recommendations, but you mentioned that you had many more. Is there something else that maybe you could share that's sort of the wish list of all of the recommendations you could make?

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Well, there's certainly one—thank you for inviting me to do that. I did cut recommendations off my list, as I said. One thing that I think is important is step 10 of the sexual violence action plan. If you look at step 10, what it says is providing legal advocacy for “survivors whose cases are proceeding toward a criminal trial.” But if you look at just the snapshot of statistics that I just gave you, there's only 16.1% of charges, and we know 50% of those don't proceed to trial ever. So that's maybe 8% of women who would be able to access that legal advocacy.

What we've learned is that women need the legal advocacy when their cases are not proceeding to trial. That's when they come to us and say, “What do I do? I was sexually assaulted. I'm not being believed. I want to

go forward. Who do I talk to?” Women in those situations actually have no access to legal aid. They have no access to legal advocacy, apart from what they receive from us. So I would really encourage the province to consider expanding that recommendation to include women who have reported, whether or not their cases are proceeding to a criminal trial. I think that's deeply important.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much, Sunny. You have a great name—

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Thank you.

Ms. Laurie Scott:—and a tough job, so thank you for doing that.

Following up, just quickly, on Peggy's about the Philadelphia model: If you could connect with our researchers—one of my asks is, what is the Philadelphia model?—so that we know, and make recommendations.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Quickly, the other was, when you mentioned the publishing—you had to go to the FOI, and they published the results, the 33% and the 16%. If that was published, how do you think that reaction would be—the women? Because even fewer would come forward, in my mind.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: I think that a lot of women already know that, which is why you see 90% of them refusing to access the criminal justice system. They hear it from their friends, from loved ones, from people who report—and just from their own experiences. But I do understand that concern.

I think, however, that for women, or certainly the women I've worked with, it would be really meaningful for them to actually be able to see what's going on. It presents a huge barrier for survivors that, once they move past the inside of that police station wall, nobody knows what happens on the inside. Nobody can access it. Nobody can get any information about it. That puts them in total isolation. As I said, they do come out saying, “These are the experiences that we're having,” but it turns into an argument of trying to prove it. We've certainly experienced that, over a long period of time, for large groups of women.

At least by having those statistics, not only can we get past the argument of proving whether or not there's a problem—which is where we're very stuck a lot of the time—but then we can also have something to measure how we improve.

If “unfounded” rates go down, that does not necessarily mean that the problem is improving, because what we've learned from other jurisdictions, particularly Philadelphia, is that sexual assaults just get re-coded another way. But if “unfounded” rates go down and charge rates increase, and we can see that happening, that is a demonstrable, evidence-based, measurable indication that something is shifting in our criminal justice system. I think that without that, we're not going to be able to re-inspire public trust.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Good. Thank you so much, Sunny.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Sunny Marriner, we want to thank you and express our gratitude for providing such an interesting presentation, our very last presentation while travelling.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Thank you for your patience and for the incredibly long day that you've had. Did you actually start at 8 today?

Interjections: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We sure did.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Okay. Enjoy the rest of your evening.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, I would like to personally thank you all for the wonderful questions you have asked all week, for hanging in, for providing such interesting travel.

We should also thank the Clerks' office for all of their hard work. To the Hansard folks, to our translators and to our technical people: This has been a tremendous experience. I look forward to seeing you all next Wednesday, May 27, at 4 p.m., as we begin our report-writing.

The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment is now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1638.

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente

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Mr. Han Dong (Trinity–Spadina L)

Mr. Randy Hillier (Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington PC)

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Ottawa–Orléans L)

Ms. Harinder Malhi (Brampton–Springdale L)

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry (Cambridge L)

Ms. Eleanor McMahon (Burlington L)

Mr. Taras Natyshak (Essex ND)

Ms. Peggy Sattler (London West ND)

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Ms. Daiene Vernile (Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre L)

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

Mr. John Fraser (Ottawa South L)

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes

Hon. Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre L)

Mr. John Yakabuski (Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke PC)

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Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 16 septembre 2015

Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel



Chair: Daiene Vernile
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Wednesday 16 September 2015

COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE ET DU HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Mercredi 16 septembre 2015

The committee met at 1600 in committee room 1.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. Good afternoon, committee members. It's good to see you all back here. I trust that you all had a very lovely summer, and we're all looking forward to getting back to work.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I understand that our subcommittee members had a meeting. Do we have some information to report on that?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Your subcommittee met on Tuesday, September 15, to consider the method of proceeding on its order of the House dated Thursday, December 11, 2014, and recommends the following:

(1) That the following organizations be invited to appear before the committee in Toronto: the Ontario Women's Directorate and the Ontario Roundtable on Violence Against Women.

(2) That the witnesses be scheduled for Wednesday, September 23, 2015, as the first option and on Monday, September 28, 2015, as the second option.

(3) That the witnesses be offered up to 20 minutes for their presentation, followed by 25 minutes of questioning from committee members.

(4) That the research officer provide a summary of the written submissions received over the summer recess by Monday, September 21, 2015.

(5) That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the Chair, is authorized immediately to commence making any preliminary arrangements necessary to facilitate the committee's proceedings.

That's the report of the subcommittee.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Do we have any discussion on this? Yes, MPP Malhi?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I just was thinking: Should we not have dates? Would it be a good idea to have dates of when we start our report writing, to have a firm date so that we can set some deadlines for ourselves?

Ms. Laurie Scott: We did discuss it in committee generally, when we need to start writing. We need to be finished report writing by November 23, I believe, is what we had written down, so that there's time for translation, because we need to table it December 10.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, should we have a date that we begin writing the report?

Mr. Han Dong: I think so.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): What are you suggesting?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: What I'm suggesting is if maybe we could add a date—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Like the middle of October or something.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: —like September 30 be our date to start report writing. We have eight meetings this year. We have eight opportunities on Wednesdays to meet, starting today. Today would be one of them. That leaves us with seven. If we wanted the report done by the 23rd, we have five days left in between to write the report. Thinking about how long it took us to get through the interim report, I think it would be a good idea—I don't know—for us to set some deadlines so we're all aware that we've got to get through it in this time. If we looked at maybe September 30 as a date to say, "This is the day we start report writing," and, after that, we don't see any more witnesses; maybe just take written submissions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would tell the committee members, too, that we have the opportunity, if we do have additional people from whom we wish to hear, the Chair can call additional meetings, as we did in the past, meeting on Monday afternoons. Is there any discussion on beginning our report writing by September 30? Yes, MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have never been through the process of report writing with recommendations. I'm wondering: As a starting point, would it be appropriate to ask research to put together all of the specific recommendations that were made by witnesses so we could see exactly what had been recommended through the course of the input that we received? I don't know how these things usually work, but that, to me, seems reasonable.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You'd like to see perhaps a point-form list, a lengthy list of all the recommendations made?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Just when somebody said, "I recommend that," so that we go through the testimony and then we see the specific recommendations that came forward from the witnesses through the course of the input.

Ms. Carrie Hull: The interim summary does contain primarily that. There's a bit of material that we could remove. There are a lot of witnesses who presented background information, statistics and things like that. We could take that out. But I'll just warn you that even with taking out the stats and stuff, it's still going to probably be 70 pages. That might help a little bit, but it will still be a lot of material that you'll have to go through.

Another thing we've done in the past, and we certainly can still do that, is to present, to help start, a list of the main themes that the committee has heard testimony about. You can then decide whether you want to develop recommendations around those themes. If there are themes that we haven't covered that you still would like to cover, we can do something to that effect as well.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Carrie actually just covered what I was going to ask. I know she has been involved in other select committees, so I was just going to say, give us an overview of how we've done it in the past. You've done that, so I'm done.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So you're able to provide that for us?

Ms. Carrie Hull: Certainly. We could do the list of recommendations, but I'll just let you know that there are still hundreds of them, so I don't know how much more that will help you along than the summary did already. There are just a lot of recommendations.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I guess I'm not done. My suggestion would be that we look at the general themes and see which ones we want to focus on—recommendations: remove, expand upon. So stick with the themes as opposed to getting 70 more pages of what really is encapsulated in the interim report.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Would it be at all helpful if it were done in point form versus a lengthier version?

Ms. Carrie Hull: Yes. I think we could do the themes as, basically, a seven-word sentence for each theme, something short that everybody can process.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): How soon can you provide that for us?

Ms. Carrie Hull: That can be done for the next meeting, if not sooner.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Are we prepared, then, to move forward and begin our report writing on September 30? Are we in agreement with that?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Sorry, I have another point to add to that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: The other thing I think we should consider is, after we start report writing, how long are we going to take written submissions? Maybe we should try to cut it off at the 7th so that they're not having to go back every time, if we continue to take written submissions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do you have a suggestion on when you would like to see us end those?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Possibly a week later, the 7th of October, so that they have that working time with what they have.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Are we in agreement with that, too?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Chair, are we still getting many written submissions? If we're going to start report writing on the 30th, I'd rather cut the written submissions off at the 30th as well.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Are we in agreement with that? Yes?

MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Over the summer, there have been how many submissions?

Ms. Carrie Hull: We'll have the summary of what's happened since we last met—I think we could probably have it for you tomorrow.

There were five submissions since the committee last met. In between the time when we started drafting the report and you had your last meeting, there were five additional submissions. There's really not that much material.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): If I may add, Chair, the current ad on the parliamentary channel does not have a deadline for written submissions. We left it open-ended. If you like, I can correct that, tweak it and put in the September 30th deadline.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I think so.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): It would appear that we're going to amend our subcommittee report to include that we're going to be beginning our report writing on September 30 and that we will end our acceptance of submissions on the same date.

MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Can I make a friendly amendment and suggest, if you're going to post this, that the written submissions actually finish on Monday the 28th if the report writing is going to begin on Wednesday the 30th?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's fine. I was just going to say we should end it before we start report writing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: One quick question: While we're report writing—and I'm looking into the fall—would we be able to circle back with witnesses or with experts to check on recommendations or check wording or meaning with anything, either through written or by a quick call?

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Perhaps I'll get you to explain that, Clerk.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): Normally, we do not go back to check with the witnesses because the report will be the finding of the committee members, not the witnesses. You may have a committee report that the witnesses do not agree with, but at the end

of the day, it is a committee report from the members of the committee to the Legislature.

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Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I fully understand that. What I meant was, are we able to check back with witnesses just to have them clarify a point while we're looking at recommendations? It wouldn't be checking with them to see if we should put their recommendation forward; it's more to clarify—because some of the witnesses came forward at the beginning of the committee. In order to refresh our memory, to look at wording or to make sure we had their meaning right, is it feasible to check back?

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our Clerk will address that.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): It's a bit of a slippery slope if we start making the committee report available to the public before members of the Legislature see it. We could have a question of privilege if you start sharing information on what's in the report. I don't know how the consultation—

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: That's not what I meant, actually.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, MPP Jones and then MPP Sattler.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I think I know what you want and I think that there is a way to do it without impacting our ability to actually write the report as committee members, and that is these two researchers. If there is further clarification, if we ask the researchers to get that detail, then it protects us so that the individual witnesses don't get the impression that we're leaning one way or the other. It still allows us that additional detail that we might be looking for. Is that fair?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: That's exactly what I was asking. Thank you for clarifying my brain.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Sattler, did you want to wade in?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I just want to reinforce that point. Laurie brought up the issue around the judicial process. If we're developing recommendations about the judicial process and we have questions like, "Hey, how does that work?", I think that it's important that we have the ability to get some knowledge to contextualize the recommendations.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): For the sake of expediency, rather than rewriting the subcommittee report with amendments, are we prepared to vote on this based on what you see in front of you and, additionally, that we are going to be cutting off our acceptance of new submissions by September 28, and beginning our report writing on September 30? Are we all in agreement with that? May I ask how many are in favour?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Sorry, can I just cut in one more time? Can we clarify that we're going to be inviting the chairs of the round tables out—not members of the

round table, but chairs? Because it's not in there. We'll send the invitation out to the chairs?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We are sending invitations out to the round table and it is being addressed to the chairs.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Okay. That's fine.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Resuming our vote, are we all in favour of the subcommittee report and the amendments? All in favour of the amendments? Carried.

All those in favour of the subcommittee report, as amended? Carried.

Our next meeting is going to take place a week from now: next Wednesday at 4 p.m. As soon as our Clerk departs, he is going to be scheduling the two people who are on our list here.

Any further comments from anyone? Yes, MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Just to follow up, we had agreed to two invitees; they're coming from the women's directorate and the round table. Were we going to discuss any more, or is that kind of later on, about getting anyone else to appear before committee?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Why don't we leave that to our subcommittee members?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. So you'll leave it back to us, with what you want to decide?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: We're running out of runway. If we're starting report writing on the 30th—

Ms. Laurie Scott: I know. That's why it's kind of like—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If our subcommittee members do have suggestions, I would suggest that you reach out, and perhaps we can have a telephone conference.

MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I think that, given that we're going to be looking at the summary of themes and then choosing the areas that we think merit recommendations, those are the areas that we would potentially want some more witnesses on. Shouldn't the decisions about more witnesses be linked to—

Ms. Laurie Scott: The summary of this?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes. So we can decide at a later date, right? We're not closing the door to having somebody else come appear, but they have to do it before the 28th, if possible.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: The 30th.

Ms. Laurie Scott: The 30th.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're not going to have much time after that.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, that's why it's just like—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): This is why we're looking forward to, as quickly as possible, that summary of recommendations.

We will see you all next week: same time, same place. This meeting stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1616.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE
ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

Wednesday 23 September 2015

**COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE
ET DU HARCÈLEMENT
À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL**

Mercredi 23 septembre 2015

The committee met at 1600 in room 151.

**STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. I would like to welcome all of the presenters and guests who are here with us today.

Let me just very quickly share with you the mandate of this committee. We are here to listen to the experiences of survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You are going to inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. Your advice is going to help guide us as we make recommendations to the government of Ontario on dealing with systemic sexual violence and harassment.

ONTARIO WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Welcome. We thank you for adding your voice to this very important issue. You will now have up to 20 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions from our committee. Please begin by stating your name and who you represent.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Thank you. My name is Juanita Dobson. I'm the assistant deputy minister with the Ontario Women's Directorate and the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat. I have with me as well Susan Seaby, who's our executive director from the Ontario Women's Directorate.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I understand you have a video you want to share with us.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: We do. Probably partway through the presentation, if we could, we would like to show a video of our ad.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Please begin with your presentation.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Thank you. Good afternoon, members of the committee. Thank you very much for inviting us to present here to the select committee. We've been watching the work you've been doing and certainly have read your interim report, and we're happy to be here

today to speak to you about some of the work we've been doing.

I'm going to provide a little bit of background today on what the OWD and our priority focus areas are in the area of violence against women, as well as give an update on the action plan, It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment.

I'd like to begin by providing a little bit more context on the range of activities and work that are under way in the various ministries on violence against women.

The priorities of the Ontario Women's Directorate are the prevention of violence against women, as well as increasing women's economic security. Those are big portfolio responsibilities for us, but we don't do that alone. We certainly work extensively in partnerships across government, but also with organizations across social services, health, justice and the education sectors. These partnerships support the development and delivery of the programs, services and policies that the OWD works within for women in Ontario.

This committee is very aware, of course, about the need to prevent violence against women. Some of the key facts that I just want to mention again are that violence can take many forms, as we know, including domestic violence, sexual assault, abuse, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, cyber harassment, sexual harassment and stalking, just to name a few. It's estimated that about one in three Canadian women will experience sexual assault in their lifetime. That's a Stats Canada stat that people are quite familiar with. Also, sexual assault victimization rates are five times higher for women under the age of 35, so that's a primary focus area for the OWD. In many cases, women know their sexual attacker—in three quarters of the incidents—and 45% are a casual acquaintance or a friend. In 17% it's an intimate partner; another 13% might be a non-spousal family member.

Those are some of our realities and statistics that we deal with.

Ontario funds a number of programs and services across a number of ministries. I'll give you just a few examples that many of you are probably familiar with. One is the Victim/Witness Assistance Program through the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The Ministry of the Attorney General also has programs like Victim Crisis Assistance and Referral Services, a Victim Support Line and a Partner Assault

Response Program. They're also responsible for things like the specialized domestic violence courts and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, to name a few things.

We reside actually in the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. The women's directorate and the seniors' secretariat are in that ministry. That program area, citizenship and immigration, is responsible for language interpreter services. So we work closely with the other part of our ministry around that, and that is providing translation and support for women whose first language is not English.

Sexual assault centres through MAG—certainly we've heard a little bit about them in the news lately in terms of the investment there and the sexual assault and domestic violence treatment centres that are centred in hospitals and funded through the Ministry of Health.

There are also support services for male survivors through the Ministry of the Attorney General, and the shelters for women are certainly funded through the Ministry of Community and Social Services, as well as counselling services. It's a big investment through that ministry.

The Ontario Women's Directorate funds women's centres, which also provide information and resources for women. We also support training programs for women who are experiencing or are at risk of domestic violence. So there's a real range of services and programs across a number of ministries that the OWD is involved in, but that certainly cut across a number of areas.

We also do some, I guess, non-direct service programs; for example, the domestic violence community coordinating committees, which some of you may be familiar with. Those include representations from women's services agencies, and justice, health and education sectors, and as well, training professionals in order to improve their skills in responding to victims. Those are a number of things that have been worked on in the last several years.

Certainly we also know that aboriginal women in particular are disproportionately affected by violence and often experience the most severe forms of violence. So a few years ago the government put in place a Joint Working Group on Violence Against Aboriginal Women and identified priorities with the caucus—the groups representing the aboriginal community—around programs and services to prevent violence against aboriginal women. This joint working group is comprised of 10 ministries as well as five provincial aboriginal organizations working on a long-term strategy to end violence against aboriginal women.

That proposed strategy will build on a number of current initiatives that the Ontario Women's Directorate has been involved in supporting, such as the Taking Care of Each Other's Spirit program, which is raising awareness about violence against women in aboriginal communities. Another program, which is called I Am a Kind Man, is encouraging aboriginal men and boys to speak out against violence. As well, the Building Aboriginal

Women's Leadership program is training aboriginal women to take on leadership roles in the community.

OWD's role in these and other action plans that cut across government is to provide a coordinating role, track implementation and communicate some of the progress on these things. We know that changing public attitudes takes a sustained effort over a long period of time, and the OWD supports a number of public education efforts with our partners. These are targeted toward sexual violence in particular. One of the programs we've had a relationship with for a number of years is Draw the Line. This is a bilingual, bystander social marketing campaign that challenges commonly held myths that perpetuate sexual violence, and equips those closest to women and girls with the skills to intervene safely and effectively.

I've already mentioned the I Am a Kind Man program with the aboriginal community. Another program—It Starts with You. It Stays with Him—is a campaign engaging men to be role models to boys and young men in promoting gender equality and teaching them about consent and healthy relationships.

In addition, we in the OWD have done a lot of work around domestic violence with our domestic violence action plan and the Neighbours, Friends and Families campaign, which many of you may be familiar with, and that has been a very successful campaign that has been ongoing through that. It's an ongoing province-wide campaign, and has been adapted to diverse communities as well, so the aboriginal community as well as reaching out to other cultural and multilingual communities with that campaign.

This year, of course, there has been lots of public discourse around the goal of ending sexual violence and harassment, several high-profile incidents and so on, and this select committee coming together as well. The high priority that was given to this issue resulted in the OWD being asked to lead, on behalf of the government, pulling together an action plan across government; really, a whole-of-government approach to sexual violence and harassment and ending that.

This plan—the focus around it—was about changing attitudes and behaviours, seeding generational change in schools, and raising awareness that sexual violence and harassment is a social and criminal issue for all of us to prevent.

The plan itself—I've left copies for all of you to take a look at, if you haven't read it already—is a mix of shorter- and longer-term initiatives. These are designed to provide supports for survivors, make workplaces and campuses safer, and improve the overall legal and medical response to incidents of sexual violence and harassment.

Some of the key things that are included in there are—and we're sort of on our way to starting to implement a few of these areas already:

—to continue to raise awareness about sexual violence and harassment through public education campaigns and projects, because we know from research how important sustained public messaging is on that;

- enhancing training and resources for service providers so they can better assist survivors and those at risk of sexual violence;

- increasing supports and developing an enhanced prosecution model to improve the experience of survivors who are navigating the justice system;

- inspiring generational change by helping students gain a deeper understanding about the root causes of gender inequality and issues around healthy relationships and consent;

- creating safer environments for our college and university students, including private colleges; and

- introducing legislation that will enable some of these things to happen, which will strengthen provisions that relate to sexual violence and harassment in the workplace, on campus, in housing situations and also through the civil claims process.

So there are some details within the action plan. You'll see particular areas that we're focusing on in that regard.

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I think I'll take a few minutes just to talk quickly about the ad campaign and then maybe we'll show the ad shortly. You may have seen this ad; it's been a multi-media, multilingual public education campaign that was launched in the spring to raise awareness among young people and bystanders, and it's a key part of the action plan.

Just a few numbers that we are hearing that are quite phenomenal to us: The Twitter hashtag, which is a unique way to drive people to a hashtag versus a website of government, was a way to engage young people in particular because we hear that that's how they do these things—I actually don't know how to use Twitter hashtags, but that's okay; my eight-year-old will teach me how to do that. But the #WhoWillYouHelp hashtag has reached more than 83.5 million people, not only in Ontario but around the world. We've heard from places in Europe—we've had big numbers of people looking at it, I think, in Turkey and Brazil, so it's been interesting.

There have been, I think, 1.9 million or so hits on our Facebook page, so it's just been something that's been quite phenomenal. I don't think we've ever seen something like that.

This is a campaign targeted at bystanders, which, again, based on the research and the information that we have available to us, seems to be the way to go on these kinds of campaigns, and we've had about two million views on YouTube.

With that, I think we'll just show the ad and then I'll be able to finish.

Video presentation.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: So that's our campaign. Now, we will be continuing this fall with a number of other targeted campaigns, particularly on campuses. With the frosh week kits, actually, we sent material out to every university to be included in frosh kits around the #WhoWillYouHelp hashtag, and also pushing out ads in washrooms in bars and restaurants etc. So we're targeting

areas where we know young people may be able to see this.

As we get closer to moving from the introduction of the action plan and all of the pieces that we've committed to, we're actually moving much further into implementation now. You will have seen that we've had a couple of announcements recently that ministries have had, rolling out key components of the action plan. One is the public education campaign, but also the Ministry of Health announced their investment of \$1.1 million a year for the next three years in hospital-based sexual assault and domestic violence treatment centres. That's going to enhance some of the specialized counselling and services and the community outreach support for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. Also, the Ministry of the Attorney General is providing an additional \$1.7 million per year in annualized funding for the province's 42 sexual assault centres so that they can enhance their services to survivors of sexual violence.

We have a commitment, and we'll see in terms of timing, but there are amendments to several pieces of legislation that I mentioned earlier. Some of those are related to the workplace, like the Occupational Health and Safety Act; the Residential Tenancies Act, so that you can end your tenancy with a shorter amount of notice period; changes to the Training, Colleges and Universities Act—both private colleges and publicly funded—around stand-alone sexual assault plans for those campuses; and also changes to the Limitations Act and also to the criminal injuries compensation scheme to allow for sexual violence victims to be able to put their claims in without a limitation period. Currently, there's a two-year limitation, and sometimes it takes longer than that for people to decide to go back through the system. That is something that was committed to in the action plan.

Looking ahead, ministries are going to continue to work together to make implementation happen. We have an assistant deputy ministers' and directors' coordinating committee that we are keeping track of—the various commitments and timing around how we can move ahead on those and actually deliver. We continue to engage with our stakeholders.

We have a permanent round table on violence against women that has been convened, and you'll be hearing, I understand, from our co-chairs on that shortly. That group has ongoing work on a number of emerging issues. I'll just say that the government folks sitting there were always struck by the richness of the advice and the level of commitment and participation of the members of the round table. It's quite interesting and heartfelt to hear and see the fact that everyone is coming there from a number of organizations, sharing their best knowledge and advice. It has been very helpful for us.

I've had three or four meetings already, and I know that they're very eager to get on with a number of things on their agenda. There will be also additional opportunities for more engagement on specific violence against women issues as we move forward, of course. The OWD:

Half of our mandate—it feels like almost all of it, sometimes—is the violence against women file. So that's an area where we are committed; that's what we work on every day. That's not going away, certainly, and our commitment is to continue to provide our best public service advice on that file.

This November, we're also going to be having a provincial summit on sexual violence and harassment. That's going to bring together hundreds of community leaders, and many more on a live webcast. Right now, I think we're at—about 1,000 people want to come. We're limited to about 650, so we're actually trying to work through a very daunting task in terms of invitations. We're looking for international initiatives; things that are happening across the country; certainly our American colleagues—there's lots going on down there. So we're trying to bring people together to have a couple of days of really great interaction and sharing and have a bit of a legacy after that of information we can share across our service sector. We're trying to find the best way to bring as many people together as possible on that.

Just generally, we, like I say—the reflection on the impact of the public ed campaign is one thing, but we've just had such strong public support on the initiatives and the rollout of the action plan. It has been very positive and consistent in that regard. That speaks to the acceptance of people knowing the timeliness of this and the public belief that there's more to do.

I just want to thank you all for the time. Certainly I'm happy to take your questions, if you have any.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for offering an insight into the important work that you are doing. We're going to begin now with our PC caucus. MPP Jones will ask you some questions. Each caucus will have about eight minutes for their line of questioning.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thanks for appearing at our request today. I've got a couple of questions. I'll start with a general one, which is: How do you see the work we're doing here, on this select committee, augmenting, assisting—how do you see those two working together—the Ontario Women's Directorate?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Thanks for that question. Actually, I've read your interim report. It's very well written. I think that a number of the issues there are in line with some of the things that we've been talking about and, I think, some of the things that the round table talks about as well. So I think it's complementary, certainly, to some of the work. I think there are some things in there that are recommendations that we're still in the implementation stage of the action plan, and there might be an opportunity to look at that and see how that lines up with some of the things that we're already looking at in terms of implementation.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: So will you have the ability in the directorate to take our recommendations in mid-December and look at those and see how they line up against what you have already started and where you also need to focus?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: The violence against women file for the women's directorate is an ongoing file that we have, so we're always looking for ways to improve the situation. In terms of whether I can say that to each recommendation that the select makes we're going to say, "Yes, we're going to do that," I can't answer that, but I will say that we take all information that we get, and where it has come from. This committee is getting this information from your deliberations and the people that you've met with—similar stakeholders that we have—so I think it's going to inform us as we go forward on all of our work.

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Ms. Sylvia Jones: Okay. The last question is related to—you specifically mentioned aboriginal women. In your report, you talk about women with disabilities being at a much higher rate. But I don't see anything, in a really fast read, where you talk about numbers with the aboriginal community. Can you share that with the committee? Do you have that detail?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: We may have some specific statistics we can share, but certainly I would say that the reason the joint working group has been put together as a separate process is because of the recognition that it is work that we need to do with the aboriginal partners. That's a long-term strategy with some specific things, I think, that they are particularly interested in.

I don't know, Susan, if you have any other statistics in terms of the number of aboriginal women.

Ms. Susan Seaby: I'd rather get back to you with actual statistics. There are some broad statistics. I think they're three times more likely to be victims of violence and so on.

But the work of the joint working group has been really quite important, and I think the government's very committed to developing a strategy.

I actually just came from our meeting. We have 10 ministries at the table, and leaders from each of the aboriginal provincial organizations: Chiefs of Ontario, Métis Nation, Independent First Nations, the Ontario Native Women's Association, and the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres. Together, we're collaborating on trying to identify the solutions to the problem, which is quite serious, not only in Ontario but across the country.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Yes, absolutely. If you could give us that data, because if it is three times—which sounds like some stuff that I have read—that's right in line with the same kinds of much higher rates that we are experiencing with women and young ladies with disabilities. So if you could provide that to us, that would be very helpful.

I don't know if you wanted to carry on.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Sure, if that's okay. Thank you very much for coming here, because as my colleague has alluded to, it's kind of like how do all these activities—we have the round table; we have the select committee, and what you're heading up—how are we all interwoven, so that we can have input but also to hear from you how that coordination is going.

I have some specific questions. You mentioned, for example, that the frosh kits are out. We had the universities and the colleges—they were to provide plans. Do you oversee that they've done that? Do you follow up with each college and university? I'll throw that one sample out as a question.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities would work more directly with the universities themselves. I know they've brought in, and had many discussions with, the senior leadership of the universities and the colleges. The legislation that we talked about will actually put a requirement on the colleges and universities and private colleges to have a stand-alone policy in place, and there will be a requirement to report on how they're doing in terms of those.

It also requires the meaningful consultation with and involvement of students. TCU will be working more directly, but the women's directorate is responsible for the rolling out and coordinating and making sure that we're on track on the things that we've committed to. But the actual relationship with the universities is through MTC.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Right. Do we have a timeline for when that's happening? I guess I'm going to ask that maybe of a few ministries here. Do you say, "Okay, there is a timeline when it needs to begin"?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: I know that we've heard that some of the universities and colleges are already under way. Some of them have already begun the process, and they're doing it even without a mandatory requirement. Many of them are starting.

The legislation itself: All I can say is, publicly, I know that the Premier has said, and it's been said, that in the fall, she was hoping to introduce some legislation. Certainly, following that—

Ms. Laurie Scott: So it's not mandatory right now. I know they have been very good. They've come to the table. No dispute there.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just wondered—it's kind of the follow-up. We're writing the final report. I want you guys to be inclusive of what we've heard and recommend, but also how we are chasing that. When the Premier said "the fall," so that goes for—it cuts across many ministries, one being the Attorney General. You can't enlighten us as to possibly when that might be coming?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: I think it's up to the government House leader to pick the date that they might want to introduce that, I would just say—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Good line.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It is a good line.

We've got done some input, but, yes, that's what I was trying to say.—It's legislation. Is some of it even regulation? Can you even tell us this much?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: There may be, depending on what gets introduced. If passed, there may be some elements that are regulation, right?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: But some of it may not be. It just really depends on what the final bill ends up looking like. But I think the commitment is through the action plan—pretty specific about what the Premier asked each of the ministers to put into legislation.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay, so we can keep chasing somebody. Can we chase you to see if it's coming—the House leaders?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: I think it's the government House leaders who really determine the introduction dates for bills.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. Just quickly, it says "in fall 2015"—I think in your remarks, you commented about a summit that's being held. You will send that, and maybe we'll somehow be included?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thirty seconds.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Yes, the date of the summit is the 19th and 20th of November. We are working on invitations and so on on that. We've noted their interest in the summit and we'll work on that.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. Thank you very much for coming.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next line of questioning for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for coming here at short notice and providing us with that overview. Certainly we heard a number of witnesses commented on their support for the It's Never Okay action plan, which is a good sign. I'm sure it was encouraging to you if you read the transcript of the Hansard—a sign that you're moving in the right direction.

There was a series of very high-profile events in the fall which sort of triggered the formation of this committee. The action plan: You didn't really talk about the process that led to the action plan. Could you give us some of the background as to how these specific recommendations came together? Were these things that you had been working on for a number of years that, given those high-profile events of the fall, it seemed like a timely way to move forward on them? Or were they developed in a very short period of time immediately following those high-profile events?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Certainly we've had prior sexual violence action plans. Building on those and the history and the work that the OWD has been doing over many years in this area, working closely with stakeholders, a number of these ideas have come up in different forums—maybe not in a formal submission, but perhaps through meetings and those sorts of things. There are a number of ideas that have been generated over time, and some of those are building on our previous action plans. Others came up through discussion in those early days between a number of stakeholders directly to political folks, the Premier and others, around things that they thought were really important. For example, the students: The Premier was really open and went out and met with a number of student groups and had some meetings with them about some of the things that they

were particularly interested in on campuses. I think that you'll see the reflection—it confirmed things that we had heard as well as the OWD, but it certainly took it a step further in terms of direct interaction and advice given on some of those things.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Another question: The Auditor General did her review of the violence against women programs offered by the OWD, and one of the concerns that she raised was around measures of success, indicators, these kinds of things. For these specific commitments in the action plan, do you have indicators on how you will know that you have been successful, timelines and all of that that you would be able to share with this committee?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Those are actually under development. We have a multi-ministry team working on that in terms of the outcome measures, performance measures etc. I think in future, there's been a commitment to do some sort of reporting on that as well, so we certainly will be able to share. We don't have that work completed yet. As we're working through the implementation of the various components, there will be performance measures developed in relation to those things.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. My final question: One of the concerns that is consistently raised by women's groups when these kinds of initiatives come forward is around the resources to support them. Are you able to share with this committee some of the budget allocations that have been provided to support the implementation of each of these measures that are outlined in the plan?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Two things have already been announced. One would be the \$1.1 million over each of three years for the hospital-based, and then the other is the \$1.7 million announcement related to the sexual assault centres. So those are the two that have rolled out so far. I think there will be others as we get decisions on the implementation and the funding that goes along with those that will be coming out.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So there was no predetermined budget amount to go along with these commitments? The amounts are being decided as you go?

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Ms. Juanita Dobson: There was a commitment in the 2014 budget—I think \$41 million was the reference—around the action plan itself, but it breaks out in various ways, and through implementation we'll be working through what the exact amounts would be. So, one of them is the \$1.1 million for hospitals; the other is \$1.7 million. Those are the two that have rolled out so far, and the others will be rolling out shortly.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you for coming, and thank you for sharing all the great work that you do.

I do want to talk a little bit more—we all have very diverse communities that we represent, and coming from Peel we've got hundreds of languages in our community. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit more about some

of your public education campaigns that you're running within our diverse community groups.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: We have worked with a number of community organizations, particularly on the #WhoWillYouHelp campaign. We're reaching out to the multicultural community. I think we put it in 20 different languages, the action plan itself. Some of our ad campaigns are also targeting the multicultural community. The other thing is the investment in language interpreter services. That's at the service level as well as the public education component.

I'm just thinking, Susan, if there are any other public ed campaigns we want to highlight.

Ms. Susan Seaby: We've also been funding our community partners to engage in public education, so it's not just the government's campaign but it's also being supplemented by different community organizations representing different constituencies, because we know we need to take a targeted approach in our public education.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any further questions? MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: A quick question for you—it probably belies my marketing and advertising background: Have you got a sense of how the ad campaign—have you got any metrics or have you taken a look at how the ad campaign has been received and whether or not it's having an impact? Because changing behaviour is often what advertising is all about. Do you have a sense of that? And, may I ask a supplementary, a follow-up? Are there any other ad campaigns that we've got in the hopper that you're thinking about doing and, maybe as a consequence of what we originally saw, changing the nature of it a bit? Go ahead.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Yes, so we did look at our starting point of where attitudes are at around some of these issues, and we want to be able to go back then and see if the ads have had a change in impact. So I think there were some focus group reviews of that. We have seen that there's been some positive upswing in terms of the impact of the ads themselves.

In terms of the future ads: I think looking at focusing on areas that we know need further attention, so things like consent and healthy relationships and those kinds of things, and focusing again on the youth area. What we're hearing is that young people's attitudes are surprisingly not where we would want them to be around healthy relationships and interaction. It changes as you get older, maybe as people age, changing how they view things. Maybe now they've had children, they're married—different attitudes versus when they were very young, and it's both men and women. So we've been looking at that information and using that to help inform future public education efforts.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: More time, Madam Chair?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, you do.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: The interesting part of all that is that because in our conversations around the province, we certainly heard from campus leaders and

student leaders about the issue of consent, and the level of confusion that's still prominent, that's still present. Those conversations aren't very clear. So I would think that that would be a rich area for you to think about.

I also wanted to ask you two things: Number one, are we looking at workplace harassment in particular? Because we heard about that, especially amongst young people who are in the bar and restaurant industry, for example, and are entering the workforce. Secondly, I wanted to ask you if you'd seen that Lady Gaga has a very powerful video about sexual assault on campus. It's difficult to watch, extremely powerful—*Til It Happens To You*. I just thought I'd share.

Ms. Juanita Dobson: Yes, thank you. In terms of the workplace, certainly an element of the commitment on the legislative change is around the Occupational Health and Safety Act, particularly around workplace sexual harassment and better training and a code of practice for employers as well in relation to that, because it is something that we've heard it is very important to do.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you.

Mr. Han Dong: Do we have enough time for another question?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes. MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Just very quickly, I see that changing the culture or perception on a social phenomenon takes a long time. You are a year ahead of us. So based on that experience, could you share some of your experiences with this committee on what, in your observation, has been effective and should be kept in the long term or should be a continued practice, whether it's policies or whether it's the funding side?

Ms. Juanita Dobson: If we stick on the theme of public education and awareness, what we've heard from stakeholders and where we've been focusing on is bystander education and bystander intervention, how to intervene safely, and to be focusing on youth, so young people in particular. Within the youth, there are different certain groups: LGBTQ, multicultural areas and so on. I think that's been something that the OWD has already started on, but certainly it's reinforced through this work that we've been doing, that that's a really important area to focus on.

I don't know if Susan has anything to add.

Ms. Susan Seaby: I think that's true. We've heard repeatedly and we know from the research that it needs to be a multifaceted campaign that does engage different population groups directly. Sustained campaigns are important, to not keep changing gears constantly, and then nobody gets the message. Certainly, the research has pointed to bystander interventions as one of the key components.

One of the things that we're going to be doing at our summit is highlighting some of the successful campaigns that have been researched, both here in Ontario—because there have been some really terrific campaigns that are under way that community organizations are engaged in—and also outside of Ontario, particularly with a focus on young people, where we know we need to focus a lot

of our education in terms of changing attitudes while people are young. Because of the population surveys where we've looked at attitudes, we know that particularly young men have a lot of the rape myths incorporated into their thinking. We need to change that in the longer term.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Mr. Han Dong: We do receive over 100,000 immigrants every year, so having that—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thirty seconds.

Mr. Han Dong: —reputation is very important for Ontario, that this subculture is not accepted here in Ontario.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Dobson and Ms. Seaby, we want to thank you very much for coming and informing this committee of the work that you are doing. We're very grateful for that.

You mentioned that you would be looking at a submission to this committee. Just a reminder to you that our deadline for accepting submissions is Monday, September 28, at 5 p.m. Thank you very much.

ROUNDTABLE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd now like to call on our representatives from Ontario's Roundtable on Violence Against Women. If you could please come forward. Welcome. Make yourselves comfortable. You're going to have 20 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by 25 minutes' worth of questioning. Please begin by—getting your chair to the right level? Is that what you want to do? There's a secret lever under there somewhere. There you go. You don't want to feel like you're the kid at the adult table, right?

Please begin by stating your names and begin any time.

Ms. Farrah Khan: My name is Farrah Khan.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: And my name is Sly Castaldi.

Ms. Farrah Khan: We're really glad to be here to present to the committee as the co-chairs of the Roundtable on Violence Against Women. We thank you for your interest, and also thank you for the invitation.

The Roundtable on Violence Against Women is the first permanent round table for the government of its kind in Ontario. As you know, it was established last March as a part of the It's Never Okay, the new Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment. Creating a standing advisory forum of experts on violence against women to provide continuing advice on government on this crucial issue is something that the VAW community has been requesting for a long time, and many were very pleased that this round table was created.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: As I said, my name is Sly Castaldi. I'm the executive director of Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis. You may remember that a staff member from my organization, Jessica St. Peter, made a presentation to the select committee when you were in Kitchener during this past summer.

I'm pleased to speak to you here as one of the co-chairs of the round table. I've been involved in the violence against women sector for the last 24 years—I think it's 25 now, but I'm losing track a bit.

I'm the chair and founding member of our legal clinic in Guelph, as well as the Guelph-Wellington Action Committee on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence. It's our DVCCC committee. I serve as an executive member of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, and I believe that our coalition also made a presentation to you in Toronto.

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Ms. Farrah Khan: Sly and I are both honoured to be asked by the minister responsible for women's issues to be the co-chairs of the round table and lead this group of prominent experts and advocates in the field of violence against women in providing advice to the Ontario government on gender-based violence.

My name again is Farrah Khan. I have 16 years of experience addressing gender-based violence. I'm a survivor, and I hold a master's degree from the University of Toronto Faculty of Social Work.

I have spent most of my adult life working to raise awareness of violence against women through art creation, education, counselling and community work. As a counsellor and advocate at the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, I support survivors who have experienced violence—young Muslim women—through the Outburst! young Muslim women's project. Sorry; I'm a little bit nervous.

Interjections.

Ms. Farrah Khan: Thank you.

The purpose of the round table is to provide advice to the minister responsible for women's issues and the Ontario Women's Directorate partner ministries on ongoing and emerging issues of gender-based violence.

The round table is building on past and current work to address violence against women, and acts as a forum for experts to provide guidance to the government on issues of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment. More specifically, the round table members provide advice on broad issues related to violence against women, provide advice on priority areas for government action to address against women, and inform the government initiatives related to violence against women. We do a lot.

The round table also offers a regular space for the member organizations to connect as a community, which is really important for the violence against women movement. It's particularly important to facilitate knowledge exchange and further our collective expertise.

It's also important for the government to have a permanent and diverse group of experts who can provide valuable, practical feedback on initiatives to address gender-based violence in a quick and efficient manner.

The mandate of the round table is not limited to the sexual violence and harassment action plan; however, there's certainly a strong interest among members to help

the government successfully implement the action plan's initiatives.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Our objective is to provide advice related to all forms of gender-based violence, and our broad vision is Ontario becoming a place where all women and their families are safe and free from the threat, fear or experience of violence.

It may be useful to note that the round table is using a very inclusive definition of the term "woman" and recognizes that gender is self-identification and is not necessarily correspondent with assigned sex at birth. It represents all those who self-identify as a woman, including but not limited to cisgender women, transgender women, intersex and two-spirited persons.

Our definition of violence against women is also intentionally broad and includes all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women. In this way, the round table is not limited in its ability to provide advice on a wide range of issues and initiatives related to making Ontario safer for women of all backgrounds.

As we're only in the beginning of our work, we are still working out some specifics of our terms of reference, vision and principles. However, one thing is clear: There is a desire among members to be as inclusive as possible and to ensure that a diversity of perspectives guides our advice to government.

Ms. Farrah Khan: The membership of the round table has been really thoughtful. The round table currently consists of representatives from 21 provincial umbrella organizations in the violence against women sector, other provincial organizations that deal with violence against women issues, and two co-chairs, myself and Sly.

The membership involved many discussions and deliberations, as both the minister and we, the co-chairs, wanted to be as inclusive as possible, but at the same time have a membership that is manageable in practical terms. The minister requested that executive directors, presidents, or co-chairs of the board of these organizations select a representative to participate on the round table on the organization's behalf.

Our round table also includes experts that represent specific populations—for example, women workers, francophone women, college and university students—as well as representatives of organizations that advocate for marginalized women, such as aboriginal women, immigrant women, LGBTQ community, sex workers and women with disabilities.

The round table also invites guest speakers with specific expertise to speak to issues affecting different populations. For example, at our last meeting this past Monday, we had four presentations—which seemed very timely in light of what just happened yesterday—from rural and northern regions of Ontario to speak about specific issues and solutions for women in their communities.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: There is certainly a recognition that we need to incorporate as many voices as possible into

the round table's work. I think we all recognize the value of having so many dedicated professionals and advocates assembled as one permanent body to work side by side with government to prevent violence against women, support survivors and advocate for the necessary changes.

Our work to date: The round table held its inaugural meeting on March 31, and two days ago, on Monday, September 21, we had our fourth meeting.

We are just in the beginning of our mandate and, to date, the round table has been doing the necessary ground work on the terms of reference, our vision and principles in setting priorities for future work. As you can imagine, with 23 members it is quite a job to coordinate this advisory body and balance everybody's interests.

Ms. Farrah Khan: We've done some brainstorming and identified the following eight broad priority areas of focus. These are: inclusive initiatives for women with disabilities, deaf and hard-of-hearing women; sexual harassment; sustainable funding for the VAW sector; education, research and data availability; access to services for diverse communities; violence in the workplace; enforcement of legislation; and the role of the round table.

These priorities took a lot of work for us to come together with, but are really broad and encompass a lot of the far-reaching spectrum of violence against women that we are working towards.

Obviously this is a first step, and over the next two to three months we'll be having more conversations to refine these priority areas.

Setting agendas for the round table meetings involves continuous dialogue between members—we have a very diverse group of people whom we work with—the minister and government representatives, and so far, we've had four successful and productive meetings.

Members are also very interested in the initiatives under the action plan on sexual violence and harassment, particularly in helping the government with their expertise to make these initiatives as relevant and as effective as possible.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: As the OWD and partner ministries continue to advance the initiatives under the action plan, the round table has been asked to weigh in on some of them on rather tight timelines. For example—

Interjection.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Yes. I'm not used to reading. I'm more—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Just go for it. It's fine. Just go.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Yes. We ad lib a little bit more.

Interjections.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Thank you.

Mr. Han Dong: Just so you know, most of us are like that too.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Okay. We have given input on the legislative commitments under the action plan and provided feedback on the development of the creative engagement fund and the innovation fund. These two funds were both included in the action plan.

We've also asked representatives of the Canadian Federation of Students to present to members regarding measures for strengthening responses to sexual violence on campus. The round table saw this as a priority over the summer in the view of the upcoming new school year.

As well, members have provided input on the Ministry of Attorney General's work on the enhanced prosecution model—also a commitment under the action plan.

At future meetings, we envision to continue this important work. For example, members expressed interest in having a discussion on the needs of francophone women, as well as another session focused on priority-setting.

Ms. Farrah Khan: We look forward to working with Minister MacCharles, the OWD and other ministries to advance our common goal of a safer Ontario. We know that through our combined expertise and our work side by side with the government, we can advance concrete, pragmatic and innovative solutions to prevent and respond to violence against women in Ontario. Thank you so much.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first line of questioning for you is from our NDP caucus. MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for that presentation. You've accomplished a lot in a very short period of time. I think you're playing a vitally important role.

One of the things that this committee heard repeatedly throughout our process of public input was that sexual violence and domestic violence co-occur, so almost all victims of domestic violence experience sexual violence, and intimate partners are often the perpetrators of sexual assault. So as you look at the domestic violence action plan, are you distinguishing between those two forms of violence? Are you looking at providing advice and recommendations that would cover both of those issues?

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Ms. Farrah Khan: I can answer first and then Sly—because Sly has experience on DVAC. I can say that we, as the round table, have named violence against women in a very broad spectrum. It captures the spectrum of sexual harassment, stalking; we talk about domestic violence as well as sexual assault. We understand that survivors that we work with—and both Sly and I work with survivors every day, day in and day out—experience violence in a multitude of ways. It's not sometimes just one or the other.

Obviously, we're very excited about the sexual violence action plan, and so that is something that's been discussed in the round table. But it's not the sole piece that we have had discussions about.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: I would just add that we are very intentional. Even if the circumstances brought us through this sexual violence action plan, the intent and the spirit of the round table is to deal with violence in its entire continuum.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. When you make recommendations, though, I guess you're saying one recommendation might be particularly effective in dealing with one form of violence, but you're really looking at the broad spectrum. Okay, that's good.

Second question: Can you just repeat your eight areas of focus? I think I got the first four, but then I—

Ms. Farrah Khan: Yes. Sure. Let me go back.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So I got women with disabilities, and you mentioned deafened and hard-of-hearing; sexual harassment; sustainable funding for the violence against women sector—

Ms. Farrah Khan: Which is a very important one.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes.

Ms. Farrah Khan: Education, research and data availability, because we want more availability of stats that are not from the 1990s around violence against women. The other one is access to services for diverse communities, and then violence in the workplace, enforcement of legislation—because there's one thing to have legislation, but the other one is how we enforce it—and then the role of the round table.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Thank you. My final question is about—you mentioned that, as you look at the role of the round table, you have the ability to identify what issues you would like to have presentations on and to call in experts. Are you also looking at other jurisdictions?

We heard from the OWD about this conference that's happening where they're going to have some international presentations. Is that something that the round table is also looking at: to see what kinds of initiatives have proven successful in other jurisdictions?

Ms. Farrah Khan: We're still in the early stages of the round table, so it's definitely something that maybe we can look at in the future, but we're not right now at a place to name that.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much for coming today. There's been a tremendous amount of work, as my colleague across the way said, in a short period of time.

One of my questions would be regarding sexual harassment in the workplace: It takes on very many forms, from the PSW or the nurse who's working in community care, for example, who's with a potential victimizer alone in a home, to an image that we see in the ad, which is somebody just rubbing somebody's shoulders in a very open workplace. It takes on many forms, and I think the perception of the victim can indicate in future how traumatized they may or may not be from those things. What would your priorities be in order to address this? It really costs us all.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: That's a great question. We consulted with members of our round table who are experts who are doing amazing work—most of them from London—

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: A good shout-out there.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: —and who are leading this work in the province, actually.

I actually thought of her—I told her we were presenting here and we asked her what would be the single most priority as they see it based on their expertise. They said, "Mandatory training and either legislation or regulation." It's one thing to have policies; it's another thing if they're working and being adhered to. And Farrah, please—but I think that that's where we would land on that.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you. In terms of training, would it be just for the professionals, or would it be to all workplaces, small and large? Because I think some of the worst cases that we heard about were really from small businesses.

Ms. Farrah Khan: I think it's absolutely important. We've talked a lot about how in precarious work positions, there's no training there. When you talk about young people receiving training as well, not everybody is permanently in a position, so definitely doing it across the board is really important.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much. Thank you for being here.

My colleague sort of stole half of my thunder regarding domestic violence and sexual violence. Based on your four successful meetings in your round table—I applaud this initiative very much—what would you recommend or suggest to the government that we could do right now that would help prevent, or maybe treat sexual violence? What would that be?

Ms. Farrah Khan: That's like asking me for a Christmas present.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: That was my first question when I first started in this committee. I said this is the million-dollar question.

Ms. Farrah Khan: Yes, it is the million-dollar question.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I wouldn't say it's that much, but what would it be? Give us some examples.

Ms. Farrah Khan: I think the first one that—one of the buckets that we have is sustainability for the VAW sector. I think that's something that's been raised as a bucket, that the round table has named, so I would say that's one of the major pieces because we are providing those services. The round table has named that as a priority, so I would name that as ours.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Yes, and I would add, too: ongoing public education. If we're going to really change attitudes in this province, it has to be ongoing work and years of work and investment in public education, and early—for kids, too.

Farrah and I are big supporters of the changes to the curriculum because that's seen as a huge step. And ongoing, long-term support for survivors: This is not an issue that you can heal in 16 sessions, and I can't stress that enough. It's long-term work, and Farrah, as a counsellor, would support that.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you. Now, don't take this the wrong way, because I understand that you've only had four meetings and you've got a lot of things you want to accomplish based on that list; I think there were eight. There was one specifically related to data—research and data.

I wonder if you could share with the committee: What was the motivation for putting that as one of your “We need to do more on”? Because we're obviously struggling with the same thing.

Ms. Farrah Khan: Yes, and I think it speaks to what we don't have. We don't have Stats Canada-broad research, and so as a violence against women sector, sometimes we have to rely on statistics that come from the United States. That's a huge issue—and they don't have strong stats.

I can give you an example. I work with survivors who are experiencing forced marriage. We have the South Asian legal clinic, which is on the round table. They created a fantastic report two years ago. But I think we need more far-reaching and intersectional too, because I think, as you've said, violence against women is so intersectional that sometimes we don't have those statistics that speak to that depth.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Of course, the Auditor General also referenced that, right? That there wasn't the follow-through, there wasn't the detail that she had hoped to be able to see when she was reviewing the providers.

I'm going to ask the same question that I asked the Ontario Women's Directorate. How do you see the work that we are doing here, in the select committee, complementing the work of the round table?

Ms. Farrah Khan: Do you want me to start?

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Sure.

Ms. Farrah Khan: Obviously we're really excited about the work of the select committee. Members of the round table have spoken at the select committee. Sly's organization has. We're submitting something. I think for us, it's really important to have it and it's important that we know that across the government there is a commitment to end violence in the lives of women in Ontario. For us, that is one of the most important pieces.

We're committed, as a round table, to know what is happening in the select committee and to look at the recommendations coming from it and to work together.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Okay.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: I would just add that I think that as the select committee has been travelling the province, you've gotten such a wide scope of information and you've heard lots of presentations—which is great, which is something the round table can't actually do at the same level. I think that it's a really complementary kind of process, and I think it will be great to be able to work together on this massive issue.

Our round table is small by comparison, but—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Small, but mighty.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Mighty; but mighty, yes.

We're all committed. It takes a multi-pronged approach to deal with violence against women. I think that we all have a part to do. Just as you guys have your part, we have our part, and then they merge.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you. I cannot remember, because my memory is not as good as it used to be, the eight areas that you're going to focus on. Did you reference justice? Because obviously you made reference to the tragedy yesterday. There was a lot of justice things overlaid with that.

Ms. Farrah Khan: Absolutely. Let me just go back so I can have the pieces and the buckets in front of me. But definitely, justice is something that we are going to be looking at—just give me a sec.

Yes, so I think it goes across the board for us in the eight buckets. We have people who are from legal; we have, I think, three legal experts. We have Luke's Place that is there, the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic and the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario, which are represented. Definitely, justice goes across all of them. That's something we literally talk about at every meeting, so it's something that we definitely see as part of—women accessing safety is about accessing justice, as well, for some survivors.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Yes. Well, thank you for your work.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and appearing before this committee today and for the important work that you are doing. I am sure that we will intersect again in the near future.

Ms. Farrah Khan: Thank you.

Ms. Sly Castaldi: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, thank you all for your hard work today, and to let you know that next week we are meeting to begin our report writing. That begins next Wednesday at 4 p.m. so please come with your red pens, your erasers, whatever else it is you need to help us make corrections and move forward.

We have one housekeeping matter that our Clerk would like to talk to you about.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): Yes, this housekeeping matter is for committee members. Yesterday, I sent out an email of an electronic version of the document that you have in front of you. This is the document on the review of recommendations.

The email I sent out with the electronic version is complete. It was just brought to my attention that the hard copy I put down on your desk is missing some pages, so I will re-photocopy it and make it available to you in hard copy.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And we will have to for you next week. Any questions? Yes, MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd just like to ask a procedural question. So report writing is in camera. Does that mean only MPPs, or are MPPs' staff able to sit in?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): Only MPPs, the researcher and the Clerk.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay, so no staff?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): No staff.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay, thanks.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any more questions? This meeting stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1704.

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SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Chair / Présidente

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Journal des débats (Hansard)

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Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment

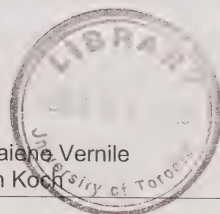
Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel

Chair: Daiene Vernile
Clerk: Katch Koch

Présidente : Daiene Vernile
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE ET DU HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Monday 23 November 2015

Lundi 23 novembre 2015

The committee met at 1417 in committee room 1, following a closed session.

STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order.

Members, welcome to what is our final meeting of this committee. We are here today to review and vote on our final report. You have before you the final draft report and I now have some questions to put before you.

Shall the draft report be adopted? All those in favour? Thank you. The motion is passed.

Shall the final report be translated and printed? All those in favour? And passed.

Upon receipt of the printed report, shall the Chair present the committee's report to the House with the motion that the recommendations contained in the report be adopted? All those in favour? And the report is passed.

Any other comments from any of our committee members?

I would like to say to our Clerk, Katch Koch, and our previous Clerk, William Short, thank you very much for guiding us through this process and thank you for your dedication.

To our research officers, Carrie Hull and Erin Fowler, you started this journey with us. You've been with us every step of the way and we are so grateful for your expertise and your patience. Thank you very much.

Any other members? Sylvia Jones.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I would just like to echo your comments, Chair. Select committee processes, by their very nature—trying to come to consensus when we all represent different political spectrums is in itself a challenge, and the fact that we've come this far with a great number of recommendations speaks to the ability to compromise on issues that are not easily resolved. So I want to thank everybody for putting their effort into making this report come together today.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, MPP Jones. MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I also want to thank the Clerks, the research assistants and really all the team

members. We've had some committee members come and go during this process.

I also echo MPP Jones's comments that this has been an incredible journey for all of us. We have heard some very difficult and emotional stories at the podium here, and it speaks to all of the committee members' and the staff's commitment to making this process move forward. From where I sit, I think the deputants were treated very warmly and very kindly by this committee. It's not easy to hear some of these things.

I myself just want to say that it has been an incredible journey for me as well, and I really commend all committee members for coming to make such a report that we're all proud to put our names behind. I've very much appreciated being part of this process and feel that we've got some great understanding with all committee members around the table.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Scott?

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's been a year since we started to drive the whole concept of a select committee. I think that all the committee members came willingly, so I want to thank them, because, as was mentioned by MPP McGarry, it's not an easy topic. It was brave of the individuals and the associations, in a lot of parts, that they came forward and that we could come together, unanimously, to deliver this report and the recommendations.

Echoing what the Chair had said already, we had lots of travel time together and got to know each other a lot more. I'd like to thank the researchers and the two Clerks that we've had. It was hard to coordinate everything. So, nine months later, since we started the hearings, here we are—a collective, big thank you and I hope that many of the recommendations are brought forward into legislation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I also want to extend my appreciation to the researchers and the Clerks. I think there may have been three Clerks. I think we started with Trevor, didn't we?

So, thanks to all for your efforts with this project. I felt extraordinarily privileged, as a representative of the NDP caucus, to participate in this committee. I know that my caucus colleagues who either filled in here at Queen's Park or who attended the travelling hearings really felt huge value in being able to play a part in this committee.

The travelling part of our committee really emphasized for me the value of going out on the road to hear from people. All of the presentations that we heard were powerful and impactful, but when we travelled, we were able to hear from people who would have never, ever been able to come to Queen's Park. Their stories, I think, really made an incredible impact on all of us. I think that that demonstrated the importance of enabling committees to travel when you need to hear from Ontarians on serious issues, like sexual violence and harassment.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP McMahon?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I want to echo so many of the comments from my colleagues, but I want to thank you, Madam Chair, for your careful and deliberate adjudication of our proceedings. As someone who joined you as new in this place, I can't imagine having done a job as well as you have in keeping us together, in keeping us on time, and in really finding a way to channel your particular passion for these issues through your work. So, I want to thank you.

I'd like to thank our researchers and our Clerks, as others have done. I want to thank my colleagues on the other side of the House for their patience and their mentorship because, as a newly elected MPP when I started this role, I wasn't quite sure how to navigate some of the processes and the issues. Ms. Jones, who has been on a couple of select committees, has been enormously helpful. All of you and your particular passions for the subject matter have really been a pleasure to watch.

Again, as people have watched us navigate this very difficult and sensitive area, I think we're at our best when we're working together, and that's exactly what we did. Like MPP Sattler said, I'm feeling very privileged to sit here and to have worked with all of you and gotten to know you better. That's been just a tremendous experience for me.

When Kevin Flynn, who I asked about select committees, told me about his committee and what a game-changing and career-changing time that was for him, I can now say that this has been the same for me. So, thank you to my colleagues in our caucus, but to all of you, as well: Thank you for being so terrific and so dedicated and passionate.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, MPP McMahon, and thank you for your kind words of support.

MPP Dong?

Mr. Han Dong: First of all, I would like to thank you for being an excellent Chair, leading the way on this very important initiative. I must share with the committee how much I appreciated the opportunity to be part of this larger movement. Whether it's the action plan by the government or this select committee, we are participating in a larger movement to address this social issue. I must say that I've learned so much in the past year while travelling or here in Toronto. Whether it's workplaces or universities and colleges—I was truly moved by the amount of evidence coming forward citing that this is an issue that must be dealt with.

As a parent of two young kids hopefully heading into post-secondary education, I feel very satisfied that I can tell them that their dad actually was part of the change or the action and I really worked towards bettering the circumstances for them.

Thank you very much to all committee members for giving me this opportunity to participate.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, MPP Dong.

Final words from MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I think I'm going to echo all of your sentiments and say thank you. This has been very helpful, especially in my role as parliamentary assistant to women's issues. I've had a lot more opportunities to learn from all of you. Thank you for all of your help and your support. Travelling was a lot of fun. It was something different, something new.

Thank you to our researchers. You worked so hard to turn things over so quickly for us. It has been a really great experience and I think there's lots to take away from it.

Thank you, Chair, for being a great Chair and keeping us on time, and of course, Katch. Thank you to everybody. I really do feel that it's been really good experience for me and there are many things I can take away from this as we work on different things in our ministry.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, MPP Malhi.

I want to express my gratefulness to all of you for your endurance, your passion and your co-operation on this all-party committee. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve with you on the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment. Like you, I look forward to the outcome of this committee.

Thank you very much. We now stand adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1428.

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**Select Committee
on Sexual Violence
and Harassment**

Committee business

**Comité spécial de la violence
et du harcèlement
à caractère sexuel**

Travaux de comité



Chair: Daiene Vernile
Clerk: Katch Koch

Présidente : Daiene Vernile
Greffier : Katch Koch

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

SELECT COMMITTEE
ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENTCOMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE
ET DU HARCÈLEMENT
À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

Wednesday 9 December 2015

Mercredi 9 décembre 2015

The committee met at 1018 in committee room 2.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. Welcome back, everyone. We thought we were done previously, but here we are again for one last meeting.

So we have some business to take care of before we table our report tomorrow. I understand that we have one of our committee members who will move a motion. MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Chair, and good morning, everybody.

I move that the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment hold a news conference following the tabling of the committee's final report in the House; and that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair, be authorized to reproduce the image used on the cover of the final report for the news conference.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Is there any discussion on this matter? Yes, Mrs. McGarry?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I just wanted to indicate that we all feel really strongly that this is going to be a good image for the backdrop, and I'm very happy that everybody agrees with that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Clerk, are we able to get an e-copy of that image sent to everyone?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): I can get a copy back. The actual artwork is with the printer, and I'm expecting it back with the printed report.

But since this motion has carried, I will get in touch with the printer as soon as possible to see if they can turn that over into a poster, a backdrop—whatever they can do for tomorrow afternoon.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): In the event that any of the members wish to use that image for any of your work, whether it's on your websites or on a placard in your own communities, if you are having echo announcements on Friday, you will have the ability to do that with an e-version of the image. Yes, MPP Lalonde?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I am planning to do an echo announcement in my community on Friday, so it

would be great if we could have access to the e-copy of the image because I can just roll it out in a nice way.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our Clerk is telling us that we need to modify our motion then, the second sentence, to not only say "for the press conference," but, perhaps, "and for additional media rollout."

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): Yes, "for additional use."

Traditionally, committee material should only be used by the committee, not for personal use outside of committee because it's the property of the committee, not of individual members.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, MPP Jones?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: In terms of echo announcements, I guess that I would encourage—suggest—that you use the press release that is being generated on Thursday, as opposed to generating a follow-up one on Friday. I mean, it's quite another matter to go and have a meeting with your local transition homes—there's nothing wrong with that—but to issue another press release or hold another news conference in individual communities starts to get dicey.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP McGarry?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I just wanted to clarify that I thought we were talking about just having an e-copy of the image, so that we could use the image as a backdrop in our echo announcements later. This wasn't about tagging into the press release that's going out officially from all members here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Given that the artist approved the use of her artwork for the front page of the committee report, can't we agree that rather than use the image as a stand-alone, if we want to do so, we can use the image of the front page of the report? Right? Rather than separating the image from the report cover, any graphic would just be the front page of the report, which is what the artist approved.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: That's what we're suggesting.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So we're in agreement that we will get an e-version of that to each committee member, so you will have access to it?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Just to be clear, it's not a version of the artist's work; it is a version of the cover of the select committee report.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The front cover. Our Clerk is going to augment the motion.

Yes, MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Once it's on the cover of the report, then anybody in Ontario can reproduce the cover of the report; right?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's correct, but we are hoping to get an e-version—

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): No, the report is the property of the Legislative Assembly.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: But you can't show a picture of the report that was produced by—

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): If somebody shows a picture of the report, that's fine. But to use the report in any way, to reproduce it in other material—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Right. But you can take a picture of the cover of the report to say, "This report was released by the Legislative Assembly"?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): I think you can. I don't know what the legalities are behind the copyrights of the report. If you hold up a report and somebody takes a picture of you holding up the report, I think it's fine, but if you take the report and scan it and use it for some other use, I don't know what the legal issues are.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Clerk, I think that we can leave this motion the way it is. Use it for the news conference, and since you will be sending us an electronic version and we understand the boundaries around which we can use this, we will follow those instructions.

Yes, MPP Scott?

Ms. Laurie Scott: So if I went on and downloaded the report from the Legislature site, is it going to come with the cover?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): Yes. It would be the report with the cover. You get the whole thing.

Ms. Laurie Scott: So the picture and everything is downloaded with the report.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): It's just that I am not sure in terms of copyright issues, if you decide you're just going to download the report cover and use it in something else.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any other comments from our committee members? Yes, MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: I just want to ask the Chair: It's my understanding that the Clerk will be responsible for the printing of the backdrop which will be used at the news conference tomorrow.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): Yes, I will look into it as soon as we finish this meeting.

Mr. Han Dong: So we will have that as a backdrop tomorrow?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): In terms of backdrops, I don't know what is doable with

such short notice. I know I have already made preliminary inquiries into, maybe, posters or whatever. It's just a matter of the printer being able to turn over and have the materials ready.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Lalonde.

Ms. Marie-France Lalonde: If they don't, is there an understanding that we agree that we could get an electronic copy and source it out, so that we can make sure that when we collectively are there, we have that backdrop?

Ms. Laurie Scott: You want to use that backdrop in local stuff?

Ms. Marie-France Lalonde: No, tomorrow, because he cannot guarantee that our printer in the Legislature could have the backdrop for tomorrow. My concern is, what if they don't make it in time? Are we collectively in agreement that we could source that out with the logistics of all the laws, so that tomorrow when we're standing there, the backdrop is there? That was my only concern.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I saw MPP McGarry's hand go up.

Ms. Kathryn McGarry: I have a secondary motion regarding an e-version, but I'm wondering if we could just address this one first.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Members, do we have agreement for the motion that was just presented by MPP McGarry? Thank you.

Now, MPP McGarry, your next motion?

Ms. Kathryn McGarry: I move that an electronic copy of the final report be circulated to all members of the committee as soon as it is available.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Are we in agreement about that, that you would all like receive an electronic copy as soon as possible, as it's available tomorrow afternoon? This is the whole report.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): Yes, the electronic copy will be available as soon as the report is tabled.

Ms. Kathryn McGarry: I agree. That's what I understand.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): That's the only caveat.

Ms. Kathryn McGarry: We all understand that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Are we in agreement? Yes? Thank you.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): I can email the electronic copy to committee members as soon as we do the conversion, and as soon as the Chair gets up in the House to table the report. Obviously, the report is going to get back to our office before tabling, but I will not make that available to anybody until it is tabled.

Ms. Kathryn McGarry: And we understand that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Is there any other business, committee members?

This committee stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1028.

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